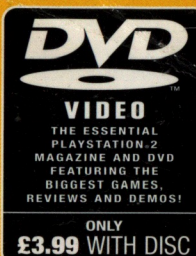


THE BEST MAGAZINE AND EXCLUSIVE DVD FOR PLAYSTATION.2

PS2



THE UK'S BIGGEST SELLING INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION.2 MAGAZINE APRIL 2002 ISSUE 27

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

TOCA RACE DRIVER

TODAY'S RACERS OBSOLETE? COULD TOCA BE A NEW DAWN FOR DRIVING GAMES?

STAR WARS

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!
REVIEW
DOUBLE BILL!



THE LIST

MALICE / SPIDER-MAN: THE INTERVIEW / FINAL FANTASY XI UPDATE
JOYPAD HEALTH WARNING / BRITNEY SPEARS ON PS2 / COMMANDOS 2
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 RIPPED APART / SUPER TRUCKS / DEAD TO RIGHTS
STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE / AND MUCHO MORE...

REVIEW BLOW OUT!

STAR WARS JEDI STARFIGHTER / STAR WARS RACER REVENGE / ICO
PLUS: HERDY GERDY / SPACE CHANNEL 5 / SHADOWMAN 2 SECOND COMING
DARK SUMMIT / DRAKAN / PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2 / WORMS BLAST
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 / SHADOW OF ZORRO / DUNE / AND MANY MORE...

STAR WARS II EXCLUSIVE!

BUCKLE UP! IT'S AN EPISODE II EXPLOSI-FEST!

RACER REVENGE

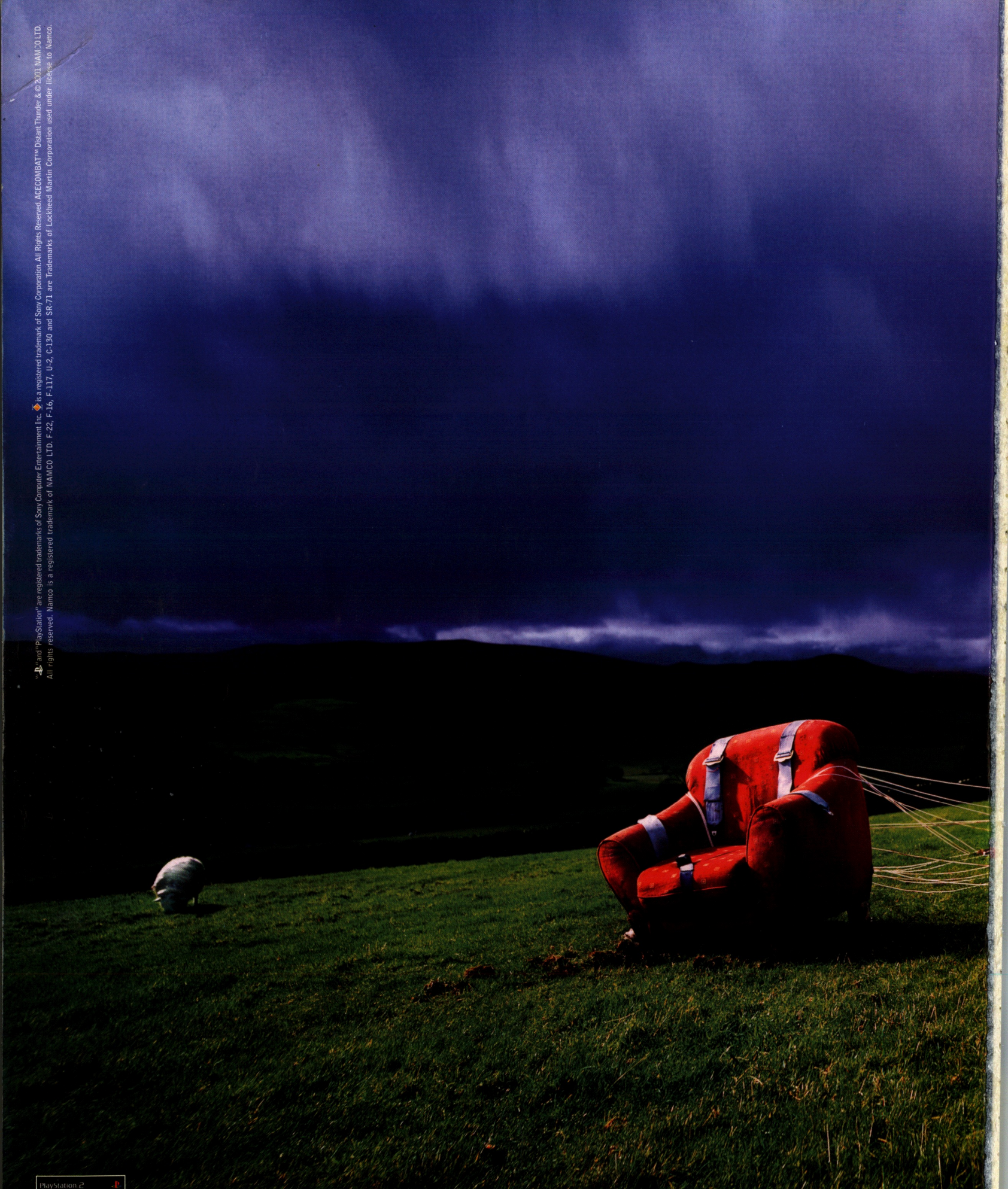
GO POD RACING WITH A
GROWN UP ANAKIN!

JEDI STARFIGHTER

FLY OBI-WAN'S NEW
EPISODE II CRAFT!



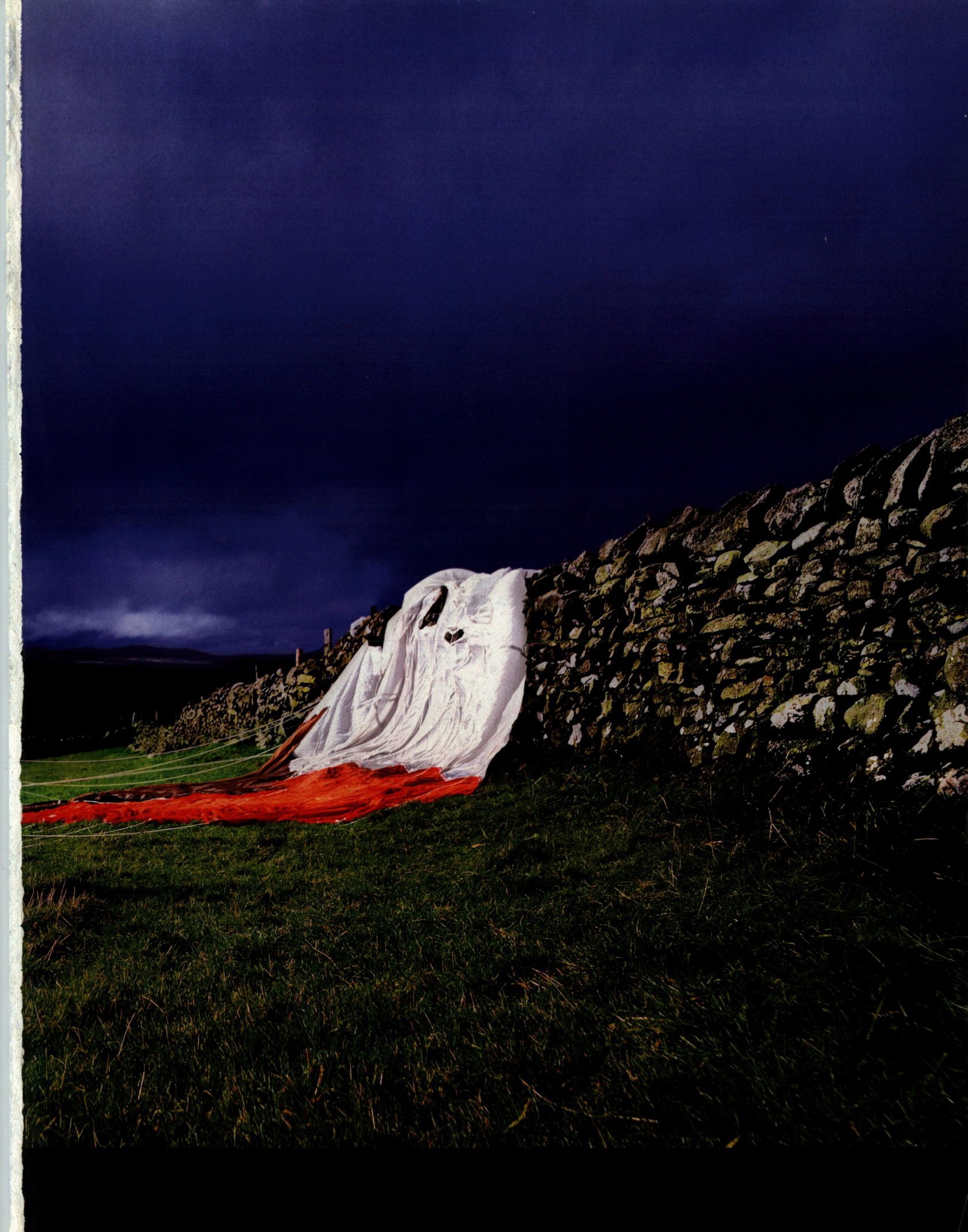
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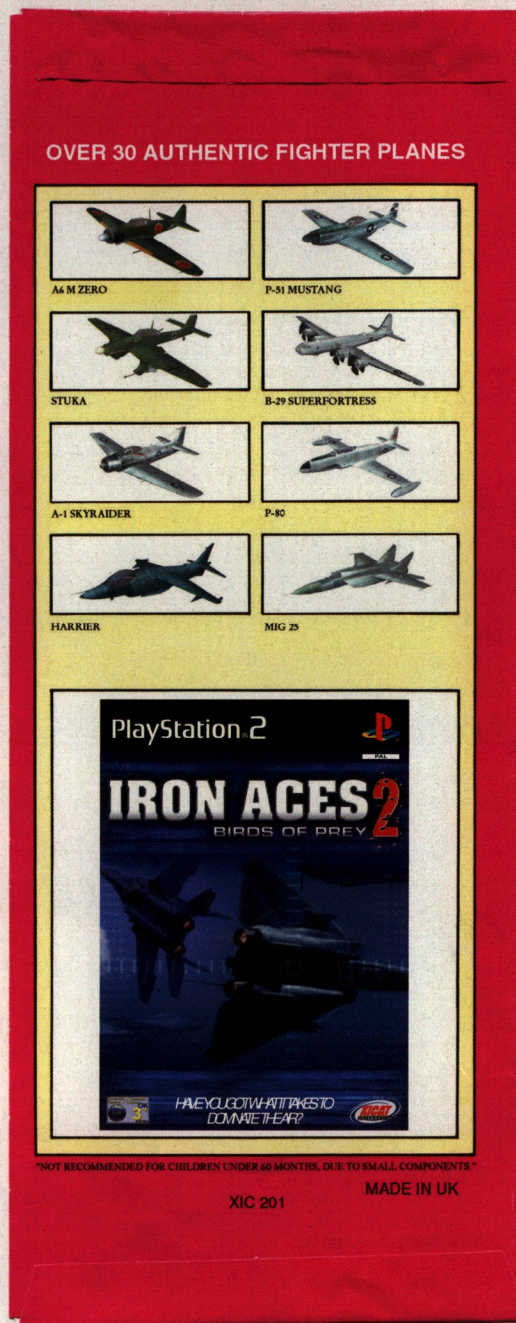
Three things you should know about aerial combat

1. To see and strike first is everything
2. To see and strike first is everything
3. The enemy knows what you know

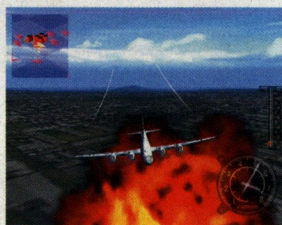
namco



Serious air to air combat...



over 30 aircraft from spitfires to f18s



incredible action and battle scenes



authentic dog fights at low and high altitudes



launch heat-seeking missiles at your targets

IRON ACES 2

BIRDS OF PREY 2



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STAR WARS JEDI STARFIGHTER

It's you against them. They're bigger, you've got the Force on your side and a pointier ship.

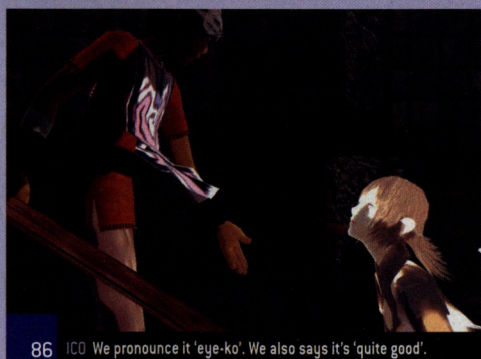


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86 ICO We pronounce it 'eye-ko'. We also says it's 'quite good'.

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THQ

ONE WARRIOR WORTH A THOUSAND!

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3



TM

- BATTLEFIELD ACTION with over 20 intense Stages and 40 playable warriors!
- Brand new 2-PLAYER Versus and Cooperative Modes!
- Even more bone-crushing moves, and improved MUSOU Attacks!
- Control your bodyguards with squad-level commands!
- First in the series --- massive ELEPHANT TROOPS!

PlayStation 2



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110 MINI TIPS

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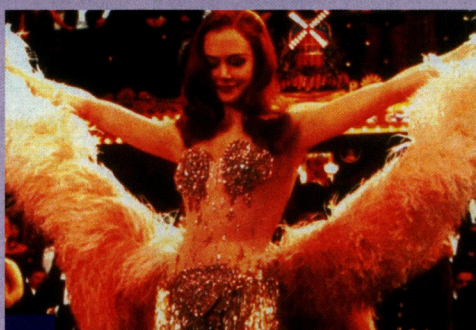
A RATHER FAMOUS WOMAN IS COMING HOME TO PS2.

130 THE TOP TEN

PEOPLE YOU SEE IN FILMS AND KIND OF HALF RECOGNISE. QUITE HARD TO SUMMARISE IN A COUPLE OF LINES.



65 STAR WARS Yet more stupid, talking, computer-generated animals.



116 DVD REVIEWS Nicole Kidman spreads her wings in Moulin Rouge.



121 UPGRADE The internet everywhere. Render conversation obsolete!



31 VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 With more combos than a KFC menu.

PSW WELCOME

E-MAIL US AT: psw@computecmedia.co.uk



TOUGH TOUGH JOYS FOR TOUGH TOUGH BOYS

THERE'S A FEELING OF RELIEF YOU GET.

A pronounced and invigorating refreshment that immediately moults the blunt and leaden stomach of worry. When the doctor tells you that your smoker's cough isn't cancer for instance. When the insurers finally pay up. When that stain on your Yamamoto shirt comes out at the cleaners.

This month I was concerned when the stuff we were going to bring you (see page 129) had to be postponed at the last minute. Urgh... worry, calamity... smoke, pace, drink coffee, swear, smoke coffee... Fortunately at zero hour my quarrelling abdomen was anaesthetised by learning that we could instead offer both the exclusive first reviews of a pair of new PS2 *Star Wars* games and... AND, the first look anywhere at *TOCA Race Driver*.

Such is life on PSW. We struggle, we hang on, we badger, we argue and in the end we always win, and thus so do you. While you may find yourself reading

samey features, looking at familiar images and *déjà vu*ing over laboured 'jokes' in other games pamphletty, here we do things a bit different. Our exclusives are real. Put it to the test yourself. Have a look this month; see if you can find another publication with a huge *TOCA* feature, with heaps of screenshots and facts. You won't. No one has it but PSW. Same goes for our *Star Wars* review double bill. And same goes for next month, when we'll bring you the world premiere of *Tomb Raider* on PS2. It's the most closely guarded secret in the video games world and you'll discover all the facts, see the images and watch the DVD action only with PSW. Anyway, as an extra gift to you this month we've got a photo-rama of behind-the-scenes bods below – getting the recognition they say they richly deserve. Worry not Foley fan – normal service resumes next issue.

/ STEPHEN PIERCE EDITOR

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MEET THE TEAM / BEHIND-THE-SCENES STAFF COLLECTOR'S EDITION!



/ TONY HORGAN PRODUCTION MANAGER

Oscillating slightly from over-exposure to basslines, part-time DJ Horgan is responsible for making the tunes on the PSW DVD menus. When not journeying through sound, he walks round with a piece of paper asking us why we haven't been doing any work. Easily distracted by sugary snacks, we leave a trail of Tic Tacs on the floor to lead him away.



/ NEIL SMITH DESIGNER

Slowly drawing squares on his computer screen with a worn mouse is how Neil describes his occupation on his CV. But if it was possible to earn a living by simply 'being tall', chances are he'd be being tall elsewhere at this very moment, such is his impressive height. He also likes football. If you know anything else about Neil, please write in.



/ CLAIRE AND CORRINE THE CLEANERS

What little work is still being done at 5:25pm quickly stops, as two loud ladies barge in to forcibly remove our cups and put them in the ineffective company dishwasher for a vague overnight chemical rinsing. We know loads about them, thanks to their loud voices. But at least they never complain about the state of the kitchen – for that we truly owe them.



/ NIGEL TAYLOR COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

"Buy, buy, buy!" shouts Taylor, Computec's Monster of Rock, aggressively down a phone line. His sushi lunch safely ordered, it's back to business – the business of making people notice PSW and pay money to feature their advertising within its pages. More ad pages mean less stuff for us to write. "Go, Nige!! Go, Nige!! Go, Nige!!" we continually encourage.

// THE 5 COMMANDMENTS

PSW IS THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON PS2. PERIOD. BUT HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE MONTH IN, MONTH OUT? WHY, BY ADHERING TO THESE FIVE COMMANDMENTS.

1// HONEST REVIEWS

We think £40 is a lot of money. If we tell you a game is worth splashing £40 on, it's because it is. End of story.

2// THE BEST WRITERS

Expert gamers, master wordsmiths, PSW is home to the best. All the facts and the obligatory sprinkling of mirth.

3// WE GET STUFF FIRST

Due to our unprecedented relationship with the people that

actually make the games you play, PSW is committed to banging out exclusive, unseen material every month.

4// A FREE PS2 DVD

See all the biggest games and footage of massive DVD movie releases first on the free PSW DVD.

5// THE FINEST PICTURES

PSW's massive technological resources bring you crystal clear shots of the games that matter.

PSW DELIVERS: ■ THE BIGGEST PS2 GAMES FIRST! ■ RAZOR-SHARP, TOP QUALITY FOOTAGE ■ MOVIES, MULTI-ANGLE AND COMMENTARY! ■ THE LONGEST DVD – OVER 90 MINUTES!
PSW DOES NOT: ■ USE FUZZY CAMCORDER FOOTAGE ■ MISLEAD YOU WITH FAKE EXCLUSIVES ■ USE PC AND XBOX GAME CLIPS ■ SUCK UP TO ANYONE! WE'RE INDEPENDENT!

ON THE DVD



WELCOME

HELLO! YOU FIND ME IN THE same carefully held position as last month, posing for the 18-foot, communist era-style marble effigy that's to stand outside the PSW offices for the next 1000 years. The reason for my immortalisation? This

amazing disc! We have for your delectation no less than four exclusives – *Star Wars Racer Revenge*, *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter*, *Final Fantasy XI* and *Blood Omen 2*. And that's by no means all. We've also nailed down essential reviews of the long-awaited *Shadowman 2* *Second Coming*, the *Tomb Raider*-esque *Drakan: The Ancients' Gates*, *Parappa The Rapper* and the truly, madly, once in a lifetime bad *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix*. Wait! That's still not all... *Space Channel 5: Pt 1*, *Elite Force*, *Ico*, *Dark Summit*... [stop Graham, you're losing control! – Ed].

/ GRAHAM SMITH DISC EDITOR

FIRST
EVER
REVIEW



● TUROK EVOLUTION

FIND IT IN THE NEWS ARENA

First-person shooters are great. Dinosaurs are great. So a first-person shooter with dinosaurs should be the best thing in the world. OK, it's not an equation to rival $E=MC^2$ or anything, but which one means more to you? *Turok Evolution* is actually the fifth in the series (hence the Evolution), but the first on any Sony console. It's going up against the likes of *Red Faction*, *Time Splitters* and *Quake 3 Revolution*, so the battle is going to be intense if nothing else. And what better way to get the inside line on the eventual victor than to scope it out yourself?

To be honest, we were hoping to show you more in-game footage, but such is the world of games – developers hate showing their labours running at anything less than full power and glory. But of course, this is *still* the exclusive first look at the teaser trailer, unveiled to a select group of journalists – and the shambolically hungover PSW contingent – at a recent jolly to The Land of The Free. Sadly, it turned out not everything was free, as armed officers later explained with loudhailers. But that's another story.



WORLD
EXCLUSIVE
FIRST LOOK!

● STAR WARS DELUGE!

FIND THEM IN THE EXCLUSIVE SECTION

Not one, not three but two brand new Star Wars games on one disc! Help me Obi Wan Kenobi! Ow, get on up! In no particular order there's *Star Wars Racer Revenge*, the game based on the best bit of *Episode One* – the pod race. It's from no lesser developer than Rainbow Studios, creator of office multiplayer favourite *ATV Off Road Fury*, so expect good things. Read the review and find out if it delivers.

Next up is *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter*, follow-up to the jerk-o-vision shooter, now tweaked, fine-tuned and honed to somewhere approaching... perfection? Well...



● SUPER TRUCKS

FIND IT IN THE PREVIEWS SECTION

"Ooooh, it's just like *Toca*... only with trucks!" cried absolutely everyone when they saw it. You might not think eight ton lorries could possibly be fun, but you'd be wrong (this time, at least). Just take a look – these AI drivers are out for blood, and they'd rather it was yours. *Super Trucks* even features real drivers and vehicles, such as the legendary Steve Parrish (one time team mate to Barry Sheene) and the slick Cat team. Arcade fun to rival *Burnout*? Could be.



● STAR TREK VOYAGER

FIND IT IN THE PREVIEWS SECTION

It may be a poor man's Star Wars, but good *Lord* there's plenty of material. And with a storyline penned by a team of genuine Voyager writers, you can be assured it's put to good use. As it's a port from the PC, you're probably aware of how good it is already – but here's your chance to see how it translates to PS2. Can it cut the mustard? Or will it smell more like somebody's cut the cheese? Get an idea of how it's going – ahead even of our review – with this footage.



MOVIE ROUND UP

Comrades! Check the Moviedrome section for info on Jodie Foster's tense new thriller *Panic Room*, Spielberg's acclaimed Haley Joel Osment-starrer *A.I.*, the latest trailer for *Spider-Man* and Tim Burton's 'reimagining' of *Planet of the Apes*. Plus we've got spooky horror *13 Ghosts* and the warmed-over seconds of *American Pie 2*. Tuck in.

XBOX

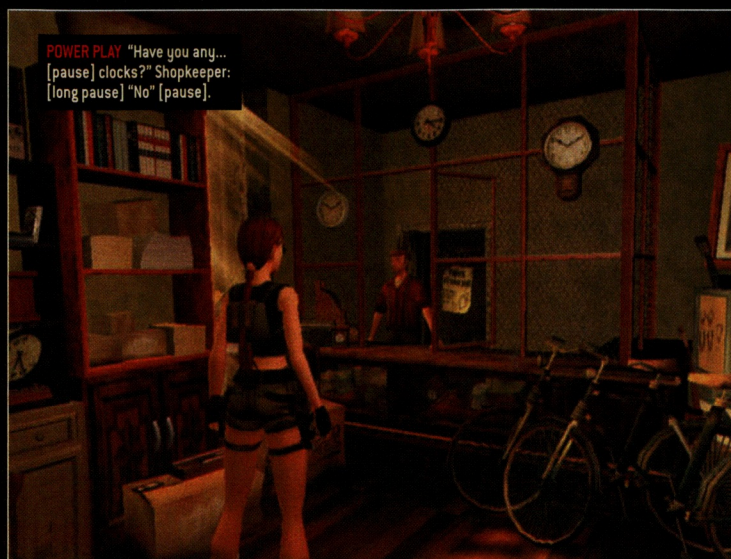
NEWS: The very first English footage of *Final Fantasy X*, plus new shooter *EndGame*, dino-based shooter *Turok Evolution*, *Hot Wheels*, *Downforce* **REVIEW:** *Shadowman 2* *Second Coming*, *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix*, *Godai: Elemental Force*, *Knockout Kings 2002*, promising adventure *Drakan: The Ancients' Gates*, *Parappa The Rapper* returns for a sequel, *Peter Pan Adventures in Never Land*, the inspired *Ico*, *Space Channel 5: Part 1*, *Worms Blast*, *Kessen 2*, *Dynasty Warriors 3*, *Dark Summit*, *Zorro*, Frank Herbert's *Dune* **PREVIEWS:** *Eve of Extinction*, PES-challenger *ISS 2*, *Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force*, *Super Trucks*, *Frequency*, *Pro Rally 2002*, *Test Drive*, *Mike Tyson Boxing* – now there's a fighter who really gets his teeth into things! **BONUS MATERIALS:** The PES Goal of the Month competition heats up! We've been inundated – did you get your goal in? *Virtua Fighter 4* character demos **MOVIES:** *Planet of the Apes*, *A.I.*, *13 Ghosts*, *Panic Room*, *Spider-Man* and *American Pie 2*

GLOBAL

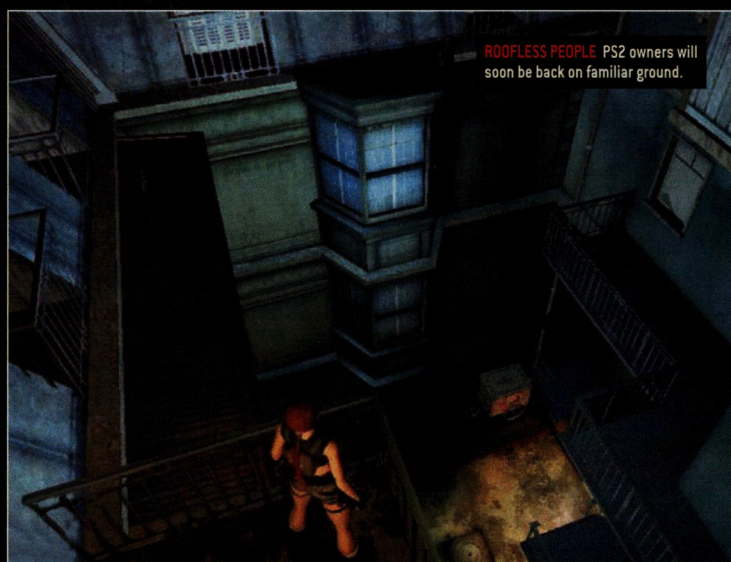
LARA'S BACK! BUT IT'S HER FRONT WE'RE ALL LOOKING AT

GLOBAL this month...

- 10 Tomb Raider
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- 16 Final Fantasy X/XI
- 18 Conflict Zone
- 20 THQ round-up



POWER PLAY "Have you any... [pause] clocks?" Shopkeeper: [long pause] "No" [pause].



ROOFLESS PEOPLE PS2 owners will soon be back on familiar ground.



CAN'T STAND THE HEAT Lara approached the oven with trepidation.

YOU SAW THEM HERE FIRST

THESE ARE THE FIRST IN-GAME SHOTS OF THE BRAND NEW **TOMB RAIDER** – DRINK THEM IN. THEY'LL KEEP YOU GOING UNTIL OUR EXCLUSIVE BLOW OUT FEATURE NEXT MONTH...

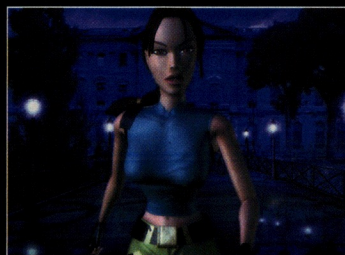
■ ARE THEY BIGGER?

THE VERY FIRST IN-GAME IMAGES OF THE NEXT-GENERATION LARA CROFT HAVE emerged. Core Design has been pretty tight-lipped about the new game so far, and little concrete information has escaped into the public realm. Even the title touted so far, *Tomb Raider Next Generation*, is not certain. While it's safe to say Ms Croft's breasts won't get any smaller and she's unlikely to have her hair in a bleached flat top, if you want to know any more you're going to have to wait for next month's PSW. We'll be bringing you a frankly awesome package of Croft info, including some lustworthy DVD specials – such as a behind-the-scenes making-of feature, no less, taking you right to the heart of Croft's creators. We'll also be bringing you exclusive footage of the game.

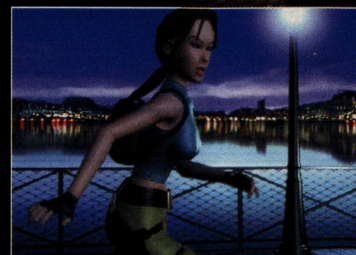
That's not just pre-rendered FMV that bears no relation to what you'll play, either – rather an army of screenshots in the mag itself. These will accompany a massive *Tomb Raider* feature full of those funny word things they had before DVDs were invented, all explaining to you exactly what we found during our exclusive visit. Really, it's all too much to bear. Yes, we're proud – it's going to be one hell of a story. And remember, if you want to know what Lara gets up to next, you'll only find it in PSW.

PAST TENSE, PRESENT PERFECT?

Those of you familiar with what Lara's done *before* will remember she was missing, presumed flat – a pyramid fell on her. This disappearance has set the scene for a number of changes, as Core expressed a desire to take her in a darker, more adult direction. It was certainly darker under that pyramid. We're surprised to see her in her traditional outfit, to be honest, especially as she reportedly begins the game as a civilian, travelling to Paris on a social visit. A little bit of misdirection from Core, perhaps? Still, whatever outfit she uses, she's soon framed for murder and on the run. New character Curtis lends frequent help, and we can expect great things from him as he's even being considered as a star in his own right, a possible for his own game. The structure of *Next Generation* is set to be distinctly different from previous iterations in both its aims and its methods – exactly how different, we'll see. Next month. Be here.



I'LL BE BACKACHE Early FMV Lara was as heavy as ever.



NICE GLOVES She's got a tasselled leather jacket too. Not.



THE JOY OF VEXX

THE WAR IS ON TO STEAL MAXIMO'S CROWN. MEET YOUR NEW HERO – IT'S **VEXX**. HE'S A SMALL PERSON. AND HE'S ANGRY.



INSANITY CLAWS Let's let him loose in Herdy Gerdy...

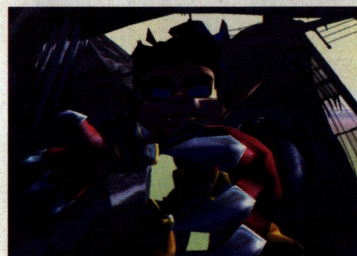
■ VENGEANCE

THIS IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING GAME IS

Acclaim's latest hope for extreme wealth, world domination and increased sexual allure. The source of Vexx's vexation is Dark Yabu, a 'Shadowraith' from the sky that kills his beloved grandpa. Dark Yabu and pals also enslave the population, but Vexx sneaks away and stumbles – hey! – across a supernatural pair of battlegloves. Cue epic jumping and climbing, with the ability to hang from the most uneven surfaces as Vexx makes his way around the 18 levels. Each has realistic cycles of day and night, and the whole world's more dangerous when it's dark. Oh dear. Your path runs through treetop villages, volcanic islands, castles, underwater cities and desert temples – among other locations – to the Landspire, where you'll face the final curtain. It's certainly looking pretty, and come October we'll find out if it lives up to its promise.

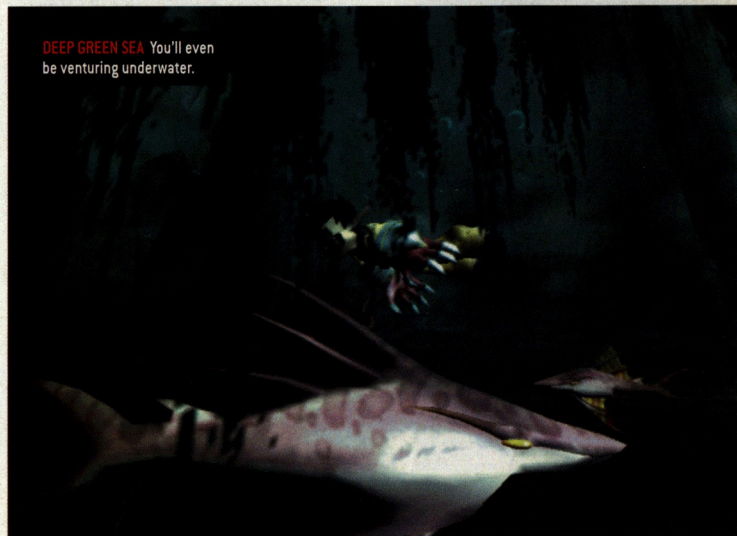


OOH, SPARKLY Bank on some spectacular power ups.



I GLOVE YOU Battlegloves. A really jammy find.

DEEP GREEN SEA You'll even be venturing underwater.



GLOBALINSIDER

MEATY MORSELS OF GAMING INFO TO DIGEST



/ ONLINE FANTASY BECOMES A REALITY

This month PSW attended the PlayOnline 2002 conference in Tokyo, where *Final Fantasy XI* was unveiled to the public for the first time. Gamers could play online for up to 15 minutes against other users, demonstrating that Sony's net play is indeed up and running. A new peripheral was also revealed, designed especially for *FFXI*, combining a keyboard with a Dual Shock. Will it ever see daylight over here though?

/ PLATINUM RANGE ON PS2

To counter the hype surrounding the Xbox launch, Sony is about to re-release a number of its biggest games at a reduced price. From early March, titles such as *Gran Turismo 3*, *Tekken Tag Tournament*, *Formula One 2001* and *Dead or Alive* can be purchased for just £20 each. Expect more titles to be added to the Platinum range in subsequent months.



/ MARCHING ORDERS

Most footy games skirt around the issue of on-pitch violence. *Red Card* – the new football game from Midway – actively encourages it. Claims of hard-hitting, undiluted and incredibly realistic footy action have been made, and while we've yet to witness the game first hand, early screenshots certainly support the suggestion. Expect it just prior to the World Cup.

/ PARTY IN THE PARK

Sony is hosting a PlayStation festival in West London this May, combining gaming, music, sports and film. The site can hold 35,000 people, and will feature the largest sports arena ever created for a UK event, plus a number of celeb DJs, bars, market areas and a games arena. The festival takes place between May 4th – 6th at Gunnersbury Park. Tickets priced at £18 per day. Call 0115 934 8757.

SLOW, SLOW... QUICK-QUICK... S.L.O.W...

DEAD TO RIGHTS HONES HONG KONG ACTION STYLE.

■ RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

"THIS SUMMER..." YOU CAN ALMOST imagine the deep, booming voiceover rattling through your bones. This could be the closest PS2 has come to a no-holds-barred Hong Kong martial arts and gunplay movie.

We expect *Dead to Rights*, from Namco Hometek, to hit Europe around summer this year. It's already clear that hero Jack Slater is a more rounded character than appears in most action/fighting games. He

fits the bill for anyone who ever wanted to perform like Martin Riggs, John McClane, or more recently, special-agent Liu Jiuan in *Kiss of the Dragon*. Slater is at home exchanging blows with shins and knuckles as he is firing high-calibre rounds. Why choose one or the other when you can have both? We don't know either.

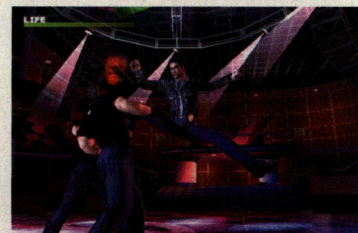
Jack has a couple of tough acts to contend with though. *Max Payne* is already out there, satisfying wannabe Woo-stars, while *State of Emergency* delivers a man-size portion of street brawls. Still, we're

hopeful that the concept driving *Dead to Rights* is strong enough to attract attention in its own right. Freedom to disarm a thug, and then use him as a human shield, as for one good example. Ooh. Slow-mo action sequences may no longer be major news, but *DTR* certainly has Hollywood style that blokes with even half a brain will be gunning for on PS2.

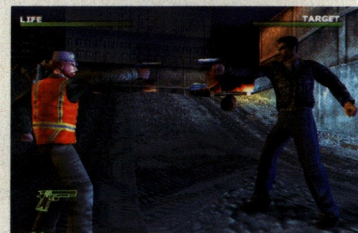
In fact, what are we saying? This ought to be a no-brainer – *Dead to Rights* must surely rock. Anyway, check out these scenes for further proof.



VILLAGE PEOPLE REUNION But which one was the impostor?



NIGHT FEVER He's just spoiling it for everyone now.



ROADWORKS NEXT 20 WEEKS "Not on my commute, pal."

FROM HELL AS WELL

GO FOR A SLASH IN PRAGUE WITH NIGHTMARE CREATURES 3: ANGEL OF DARKNESS.

■ DIABOLICAL

NIGHTMARE CREATURES 2 WAS ONE OF THE better-looking games on PSone, and we liked its maniacal manner – hitting mangled creatures of evil with axes is far more fun than, say, slapping glistening men in spandex with folding chairs.

This time we're in 19th century Prague, and by day you roam as the nubile young heroine you see here. Come nightfall, however, you transform into one of three bizarre horrors. Your target? Adam Crowley, the series' erstwhile uber-villain. Naturally the tone is as dark as the inside of a housefly, helped by the rain, fog and gore, but perhaps the most terrible thing is this: it's not due for another year and a half. Still, check out this early shot, think about something else and the time will just fly by.



THE LADY IS A VAMP And then my jumper just fell off...

SPIN DOCTOR



WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD IMMENSELY TO SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE [THE GAME...] FROM ACTIVISION, DESPITE THE DIABOLICAL MISNOMER. BUT WHAT HAS TREYARCH, THE GAME'S DEVELOPER, GOT UP ITS SLEEVES? GREGORY JOHN, SENIOR PRODUCER ON THE PS2 TITLE, SPEAK UP, FOR YOUR TIME IS NOW...

/ THE WELL-RESPECTED SAM RAIMI [THE EVIL DEAD TRILOGY, THE GIFT] IS DIRECTING THE FILM. WHAT INPUT HAS HE HAD IN THE GAME?
Both Activision and Treyarch had fantastic support from Sony/Columbia Pictures and Sam Raimi. Access to film materials and their special effects house has helped us to capture the look and feel of the film for our game.

/ SO HOW HAS THIS HELPED THE GAME EVOLVE SINCE SPIDER-MAN 2 ENTER: ELECTRO ON PSONE?

We've taken the game to a whole new level in both technology and gameplay. The next-generation consoles allow us to be more aggressive in terms of design, code, art and sound. You will see that there's a broader range of game play and innovation woven into our web swinging, combat and indoor fights.

/ DOES SPIDER-MAN HAVE NEW ABILITIES THIS TIME ROUND?

Players now find themselves in control of a more manoeuvrable, more acrobatic Spider-Man. Everything new – combat moves, in-air mobility, danger avoidance and web control – springboards off this premise. You can also expect some elements of stealth.

/ IT'S BEEN SUGGESTED THE SWINGING ITSELF HAS CHANGED. HOW?

We approached this game by asking ourselves what we most wanted to improve over the previous Spider-Man games and the answer, first and foremost, was web swinging. After a great deal of design, implementation, re-design and re-implementation, we came up with a solid control scheme and a very thrilling experience. Now, Spidey can rise and descend while swinging, bank around buildings, cut web-lines for sudden drops, and zip-line to adjacent buildings to avoid danger. Once we had this, we started expanding our outdoor city levels to accommodate the increased manoeuvrability, thus vastly improving the gameplay.

/ SO THERE ARE AERIAL BATTLES THIS TIME?

The concept, design, and implementation of aerial combat came very naturally once we had improved the web swinging. For the first time, Spider-Man will be able to face airborne opponents while web swinging. We feel that these aerial battles will be unlike anything anyone's ever seen before.

/ HAVE YOU KEPT THE FIGHTING SIMPLE, OR DOES HE HAVE COMBOS?

We wanted to capture the acrobatic feel of Spider-Man's combat abilities so we created an extensive combo system of attacks and

hit reactions that are very flashy and exciting. Certain combos are better in certain situations, e.g., where you may need to clear out a lot of bad guys, or you want to do a lot of damage.

/ IS IT STRICTLY BASED ON THE FILM, OR WAS THERE A LITTLE LEEWAY THERE?

The film did provide a strong story and context for the game and we are adhering to it as closely as possible. Because our bottom line has always been to make a great game, we added several more villains, because it would have been unsatisfying to have only one villain in the game (as there's only one villain in the movie).

/ AHH, THE MOVIE... IT'S RUMOURED SPIDER-MAN'S WEB IS ORGANIC NOW, RATHER THAN A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT. CAN YOU SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS AND WHETHER IT'LL BE THE CASE IN THE GAME?

We cannot reveal exactly what the film will do but on the game side, we haven't been too explicit about the organic or non-organic nature of the webbing. For example, for gameplay purposes, we've kept the web power ups.

/ GREEN GOBLIN, VULTURE AND SHOCKER – WHO ELSE WILL WE SEE?
Ha ha... I'm sorry, I can't tell you that...

/ ARE THE MOVIE CAST MEMBERS RECORDING YOUR VOICEOVERS?

We're casting the game independently from the film. Along with new talent, we're using some veteran voice actors from previous Spider-Man games.

/ THE TWIN TOWERS FEATURED PROMINENTLY IN THE MOVIE TRAILER. HAS THE TERRORIST ATTACKS AFFECTED THE GAME IN ANY WAY?

We definitely addressed issues in our game because of the September 11th tragedy. Our game takes place in New York, so out of respect, we've been conscious of settings and situations in a superhero, so the player is doing heroic things, but we had to make sure that the 'lose conditions' respected people's sensibilities.

/ IN A HYPOTHETICAL FIGHT, WHO'D WIN: SPIDER-MAN OR BATMAN?

If he had enough time to plan, Batman could beat Galactus, but in a straight street fight, Spidey would wipe the floor with Batman.

/ AND FINALLY – CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE MOVIE NOBODY ELSE KNOWS?

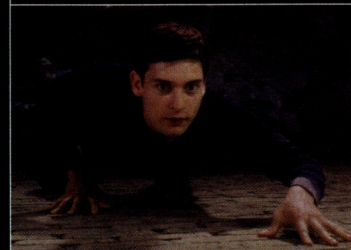
Ha ha... No. Sorry.



**SPIDER-MAN:
THE ACTUAL MOVIE!
NOT THE GAME!**

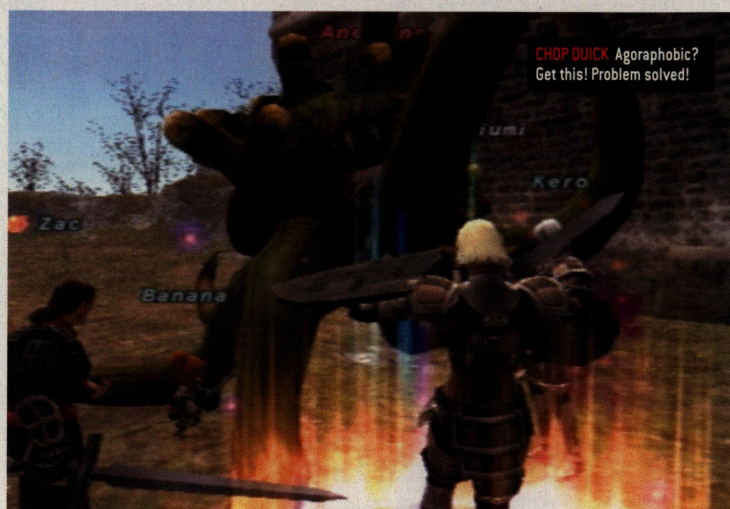
**WE'VE GOT THE BRAND NEW
SPIDER MAN TRAILER ON OUR
LOVELY DVD, JUST FOR YOU...**

AS WE'RE SURE YOU ALREADY KNOW, our handcrafted collector's disc (inlaid with genuine Mother of Plastic) isn't just games, games, games. The very latest movies await you too, and you really, really have to see this one – it's a thing of genuine wonder. Even those of us who think Spider-Man is more interesting as a Nietzschean concept than a chap in flying red pants – and that he, the X-Men and every other super-duper hero could be sealed eternally in a deep space window for all it mattered – were impressed. Simply flip to the movie section and prepare to be stupefied. There's also a host of trailers to other, admittedly, less spectacular films, including the new offering from *Fight Club* henchman David Fincher, *Panic Room*, starring Jodie Foster, as well as the latest horror, *13 Ghosts*. See, we do movies as well!



COME AND PLAY! You can find me on PSW's DVD!





TESTING, TESTING, FFXI

FINAL FANTASY XI WORK-IN-PROGRESS UPDATE.

■ BOWEL MOVEMENT ENDS MARATHON GAME SESSION

HERE'S ANOTHER EXCLUSIVE UPDATE ON THE ONGOING *Final Fantasy XI* Beta Test. Our man in Japan has been playing the pre-release online test for two months now (managing one 24-hour session that only ended when all online players agreed to a toilet and food break!). These tests for the Japanese PlayOnline network and *Final Fantasy XI* started in December of 2001, and Square is continually increasing the number of players that can gain access. By now, several thousand are testing *FFXI* across four uniquely named servers: Chaos, Xdeath, Golbez and Zande.

The game is being continually tweaked, with loopholes that allow players to get away with sneaky tactics being closed. For example, the range of some weapons used to be further than that of some monsters, so players could stand just outside the monster's attack range and slash away. Now, all ranges are equal. Power and duration of magic attacks have been reduced too, because they were too effective. In particular, the duration of the 'stop' spell

has been greatly reduced because you could cast it once then whack monsters to death before they move again.

Happily, not all updates are problem fixes. Square raised the limit of character levels twice, initially from Level 20 to Level 30, then from Level 30 to 35. In conjunction with this, new abilities and magic have been added. For the benefit of advanced players, special boss monsters now exist in certain regions that drop ultra-rare items when killed.

Some interesting features remain that will be removed for the final version. One such 'cheat' is Trouble mode, which allows you to shift to another area if you get stuck on scenery. Of course players soon discovered that you didn't really have to be in trouble to use this and used it as a handy 'teleport' function instead. It wasn't long before Square noticed hundreds of people "having movement problems" – a message went to everyone saying not to use Trouble mode unless crucial! Though most updates are bug fixes and minor reconfigurations, once or twice a month there's a major upgrade with plenty of new improvements. We'll have more on these next issue.



FANTASY STARS ONLINE: A few Japanese gamers have online Final Fantasy now!



ME, THE SKY, DIAMONDS: The power of the magic attacks is being tweaked.



FOUR MILLION SALES FOR FINAL FANTASY X

MEANWHILE, REGULAR OFFLINE **FINAL FANTASY X** OFFICIALLY BECOMES THE BIGGEST-SELLING PLAYSTATION2 GAME TO DATE.

■ THEY LOVE IT, THEY DO

THIS MONTH THE EXPLOITS OF TIDUS AND Yuna have won over more than four million people across Japan and the US. *Final Fantasy X* has become the first PS2 game to reach the four million mark. Despite only being available in North America since December, a massive 1.3 million copies have been shipped to satisfy demand over there. If you piled them all up you could make a ladder to the Moon! (perhaps). May

1st is the magic day for the UK. If you like exploring villages you'll be unwrapping your copy of *Final Fantasy X* and languishing in its story-lead, cultish splendour very soon.

Also this month, *Virtua Fighter 4* struck a glancing blow at the Japanese sales charts, attracting a colossal 400,000 buyers in less than a week. Yes, less than a week! We'll know at the end of this month how sales of *Tekken 4* compare, but that's some vote of confidence for *VF4* in a market that's notoriously tough to please.

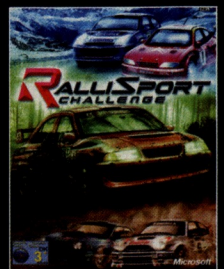


DRIVE SOMEWHERE DIFFERENT.



Fancy yourself behind the wheel do you? Let's find out what you're really made of, whether its Ice Racing, Hill Climb or in the Rally and RallyCross events. There's over 45 gear crunching tracks to test your mettle in any of 29 souped up cars. Think you can ton it on ice? Handbrake turn on gravel? Go on, we dare you. RallySport Challenge. Separates the men from the boy racers.

www.xbox.com/uk/rallisport **PLAY MORE. PLAY RALLISPORT CHALLENGE.**



WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

THE WHOLE WORLD'S GONE TITS UP IN **CONFLICT ZONE** FROM UBI SOFT. OH WELL. IT'S PROBABLY FOR THE BEST.

ENTROPY

SET IN 2010, **CONFLICT ZONE** IS A REAL-TIME strategy with a curious twist - it's not just the moves you make on the battlefield that are important. It's also necessary to get the world's media on your side. How very postmodern. It's also possible to exploit the civilians, either turning them to the darkside playing as GHOST, or by protecting them as the ICP. Despite sounding like an Eskimo's toilet difficulties, ICP is actually the International Corps for Peace, a coalition of most of the world's nations that would put NATO to shame. GHOST, meanwhile, works on behalf of the dissenting countries with all the misanthropy and cold-hearted, misplaced zeal of any other terrorist organisation. There are over 65 units including tanks, helicopters and warships, plus two 17-mission campaigns in which to play with them. And playing the

media well - and gaining public support - will only make them far more powerful than you could ever imagine. Imagine that. Oh, you can't. So wait until April with a very reasonable £19.99 in your little hand. It's easy when you think about it.



U.N INTELLIGENT Those bright blue helmets must be popular.



BUNCH OF ARSENAL It's war time, so get your spin doctors armed.



GENERAL HORROR You control a wide range of small army things.

LOCK UP YOUR PHONEBOXES

THE BIGGEST SUPERHERO OF THEM ALL FINALLY ARRIVES ON PS2 WITH **SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS**.

KRYPTOFIGHTING

THE FIRST THING WE ASKED WHEN WE GOT the news of a *Superman* game for PS2 was whether it was going to be based on the fabulous TV series *Smallville*. Unfortunately it isn't but fortunately it's got nothing to do with the Christopher Reeve 80's movies either. Instead it's focused on the stylish, award winning cartoon series.

Every special ability has been carefully secreted into the game enabling players to

finally live out all of those childhood fantasies. The chance of there being any women undressing when you slip into X-ray vision mode is pretty unlikely but the return of his arch enemy Lex Luther is a cert. This time he wants to cause pandemonium in Metropolis by freeing Metallo from prison to terrorise the citizens and torment Superman. It's up to you to decide which are the more pressing situations and then deal with each crisis without losing any lives. Expect an August release.



CLARK (COULTHARD) KENT Your square jawed hero.

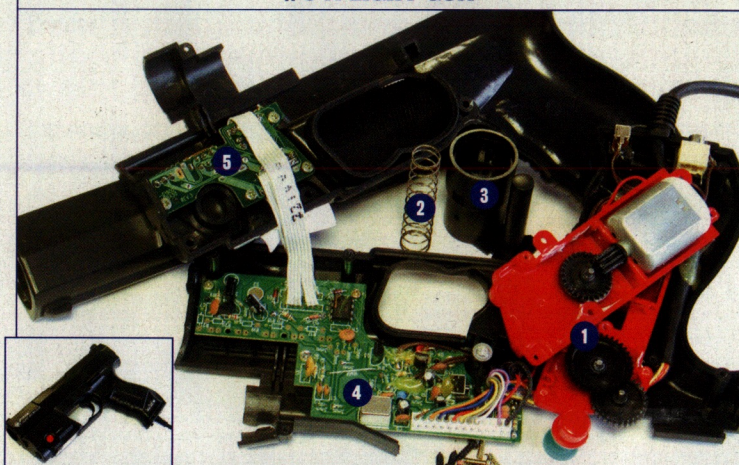


WIDE SHOULDERED LOIS We still prefer Teri Hatcher.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

WE INVALIDATE OUR WARRANTY SO THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

#5 A LIGHT GUN



- 1 COGS! THESE ARE HELD WITHIN THE RED FORCE FEEDBACK INTERNAL POD.
- 2 COGS AND A SPRING! HAVE WE ACCIDENTALLY DISASSEMBLED A GRANDFATHER CLOCK?
- 3 THE LENS. REVEALED TO BE A SELF-CONTAINED UNIT.
- 4 A STRANGE SILVER BOX. WE DIDN'T OPEN IT. WE WERE AFRAID WHAT IT MAY CONTAIN.
- 5 SECONDARY CIRCUIT BOARD FOR THE BUTTONS. WE FOUND NO SIGN OF ANY SENSOR.

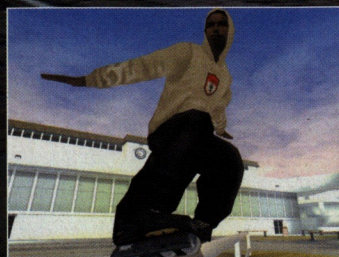
NEXT MONTH: WHAT LIES BENEATH... A MEMORY CARD'S CASING!



CHRIS EDWARDS Did Mr Hawk know what he was starting?



ROLLING Grinding would have been more appropriate.



ROLLING Don't mess with the boys in the hoods.

GRINDING TO A VAULT

MORE EXTREME SPORTS ON PS2 WITH CHRIS EDWARDS AGGRESSIVE INLINE AND ROLLING.



CHRIS EDWARDS He must be cool he's got eight wheels.

ON RAILS

PS2 IS FAST BECOMING THE EXTREME machine. EA Sports is knocking out SSX-inspired stunt-fests like they're the new FIFA, Activision has its O₂ range led by Tony Hawk and Shaun Palmer and Johnny Moseley is hopefully the first and last Mad Trix offering. With an abundance of skateboards, snowboards and BMX's already clogging up the PS2 half-pipes it's not going to be long before we've got Wild Wheelchair Racing and J. Sainsbury's Phar-Out Trolley Duel. In the meantime

there're still a few more extreme sports left to covert to digital and the next in line is inline skating.

Like buses but without the smell of wee and lethal ladies with their shopping bags full of shin busting tins, two inline games will be arriving soon on PS2. Rolling from Rage and Chris Edwards Aggressive Inline from the makers of Dave Mirra are set to do the Tony Hawk thang with two hoofing boots strapped to your feet rather than a plank of wood. Both games have signed up famous stars from the sport to appear in the games. Eito

Yasutoko must be really good because he appears in both.

As well as the usual spectacular tricks, miles of rails to grind and cinematic triggered events, the Chris Edwards game will include a park editor and ten different split screen game modes. Oh and we almost forgot, but then again it goes without saying that bands such as Limp Bizkit and their ilk will be providing the suitably appropriate aural tracks for Chris Edwards grind fest. Rolling's music line-up has yet to be confirmed. Look out for both of these this summer.

DIRTY DEEDS DONE DIRT CHEAP

CHEAP OFF-ROAD FUN COMES WITH PRO RALLY 2002.

IT'S NOT JUST CRICKET

THERE'S SOMETHING GENUINELY exciting about Ubi Soft's Pro Rally 2002 – this actually does offer something V-Rally 3, Colin McRae Rally, Race of Champions and the like do not – it's only £19.99. Beyond that, however, it's much the same.

The cars are the familiar Imprezas, Lancers, Corollas, 206s and so on; however, the drivers have not been licensed. The seven modes take place over 48 snow, gravel and tarmac stages with five on-track opponents. Expect this in June.



MARTY MCFLY This must be the secret Back to the Future mode.

DINO SCORE

DINOZ REALLY ISN'T JUST ANOTHER CUTESY PLATFORMER, HONESTLY.

IT'S JUST NOT CRICKET

EVER FANCED BREEDING YOUR VERY OWN

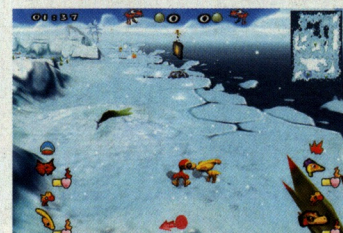
David Beckham, Michael Owen or Vinny Jones but with claws and the kind of leathery skin usually found on the lesser-spotted Judith Chalmers? That's part of the appeal of Dinoz. Take a young Dino and in Tamagotchi fashion, feed him, train him and mould him into a goal-scoring superstar. Then you can introduce him to the main mode of this title.

Dinozball is like a rules-free hybrid of football, rugby and no hold barred Rollerball, where tactical fighting is just as important as passing and scoring. Stadiums aren't so much enclosed arenas as huge continents replete with canyons, swamps, lava flows and carnivorous plants. So it's up to you, with control of up to six Dinos at a time, to put together a winning team of aggressive battlers that can be evolved individually into aggressive, fast or defensive players.

Winning matches rewards you with the bonus Dinos to breed and train. Coupled with the addition of a split-screen mode you can then pit your lovingly crafted Dinos against your mates' prehistoric creations to see who's the Sven Goran Eriksson and who's the Dave Bassett. This unique sporting title should be with us in the next couple of months.



TWISTING This must be the secret whirlwind attack.



SNOW DELAY Weather doesn't stop play in this game.



LEAPING LIZARDS Hot competition at the lava bowl.

GAMES FOR THE OVERPROTECTED

THQ RAISES STAKES IN LAS VEGAS WITH A BRITNEY SPEARS GAME. PLUS, AN EXTREME FIGHTING OFFERING, A NEW BREED OF RPG, AND A TITLE BASED ON SCOODY DOO!

USED TO BE THQ COULDN'T HOLD ITS own in so much as a bantamweight bout. In January this same publisher chose the world's most glamorous venue to emerge a ferocious heavyweight contender. Building on the success of the WWF franchise, THQ signed more globally dominating brands, including singer Britney Spears and the ultimate fighting tournament Pride FC. Meet the gaze of what you could be taking seriously through '02 and beyond.

■ BRITNEY SPEARS INCOMING!

DEVELOPER METRO GRAPHICS IS TO get the world hopping onto dance mats, with *Britney's Dance Beat* for PS2. Yes, Britney as in the divine Spears, but more crucially for the sake of the game, Metro Graphics as in the terrific *Bust-A-Groove* series. The game plays similarly to *Bust-A-Groove* too, as you aim to outperform rivals with stunning dance combos. Sadly you won't be able to control Britney, as Miss Spears' management thought the idea of fans "being Britney" is too freaky. As if we would... Instead Britney encourages contestants, or lays down challenges. Plus the game offers exclusive concert and backstage footage to attract fans in addition to gamers. She's all yours this Spring.

■ THE GOOD GAME MYSTERY

CALLED SIMPLY 'SCOOPY-DOO!', IT'S based on the TV series, not the movie, but this gives more freedom for gags and overall game construction. Scooby does all the trademark stuff like tip-toe around, pathetically whimper, and humorously collapse while trying to keep balance. It's due this summer and, we're promised, there'll be no sign of Scrappy.

■ SO YOU GREW OUT OF THESE, EH

EVERYTHING THAT MAKES HOT WHEELS mean er... something to millions of kids makes its way onto PS2. If you've played EA's *Rumble Racing* you'll have some idea of what *Hot Wheels* will deliver in Autumn. Plus Beyond Games has borrowed a few files from the *Spy Hunter* rulebook, creating a mission-based car combat game that looks like it's going to be a lot of fun to play.

■ HARDER THAN YOU

RIGHT NOW THE PRIDE FIGHTING Championship is only big in Japan, where they seem to love its anarchic brand of ultra violence. However, Anchor Inc, the team that created *WWF Raw*, is sure to make headway for *Pride FC* throughout the world with

this brutal, all-discipline fighting game. This mass brawler is due in summer, just in time to avoid those warm summer nights and barbecues in favour of kicking the crap out of your pal in a darkened room. In the meantime, check out the website at www.pridefc.com to get a grip on this brutal madness.

■ VOLITION CASTS HEALING SPELL

THIS IS VOLITION'S SECOND ATTEMPT at bringing something original, and classy to the sagging RPG market. *Summoner 2* hopes to improve on everything that prevented the original from being a huge success – a new battle system (real-time instead of turn-based), and cutting-edge PS2 visuals. We'll be able to judge the result of these new features in autumn.

■ RED AGAIN

THE BIG REVEAL WILL TAKE PLACE AT trade show E3 in May. For now, rest assured that a *Red Faction* sequel is definitely coming, and looks ever more likely to be a PS2 exclusive. So Volition will be able to concentrate on getting the best from PS2 without having to worry about pikey PC issues. Dah!



THQ'S ROSTER Whether you like dancing with the Princess of Pop, kicking your pal to near death, or strange voiced dogs, it's all here.

SPEAR I STAND
You may know her by her popular ditties or from some fake internet movie clips.



FRY HERE OFTEN? A Basilidon dancefloor, Friday night.



SPLASH ME! The erotically charged shower scene.



HELP ME PLEASE! I'm stuck in a giant condom.

LET'S JUST CHILL

MORE STUFF ABOUT **THE THING!** MORE SHOTS OF THE STUFF!

■ CARNAGE

DEVELOPMENT ON THIS NEW SURVIVAL horror continues apace, and here, spread before you like the viscera of a mangled corpse, is the latest batch of screenshots. What's got our attention is the licence – John Carpenter's 1982 remake of *The Thing From Another World*

is, in our eyes, a classic. While gory, the real horror was psychological, following the familiar anti-communist theme [the first film was made in 1951] of enemies indistinguishable from friends. In political life the foe was an ideology, symbolised in film by a physical thing that takes over minds and bodies, controlling actions, while leaving the

victim/attacker indistinguishable from 'normal' people. It was nothing but fascism, of course. But still, such a level of paranoia is what we're hoping to find in the gameplay, rather than just the admirably mangled (but not all that scary) monsters shown here. Will it deliver? We don't know yet. We don't know who to trust...



THE EVIL RED I always knew you were a communist...

WHEN PADS ATTACK!

PUT THAT JOYPAD DOWN – YOU COULD SERIOUSLY HURT YOURSELF! THE DANGERS ARE BEING REVEALED!

■ POTENTIAL DEATHTRAP

AT LEAST NOW YOU'VE GOT A LEGITIMATE excuse for those aching wrists. A report recently published in the British Medical Journal has warned that prolonged use of handheld control devices (like a Dual Shock Controller) could cause damage to your hands. Leading doctors are advising that statutory health warnings should appear on packaging, and that parents, children and games players should be made aware of the potential risk to their vital joypad holding devices.

The move comes after a 15-year-old boy suffered two years of major discomfort after spending up to seven hours a day using a vibrating controller. The excessive play is said to have left the boy's hands swollen and discoloured, symptoms similar to 'hand-arm vibration syndrome' more commonly found in workers using industrial machinery.

The syndrome was classified as an industrial disease in 1985 and sufferers can receive disability benefits and compensation, although we find it a bit hard to believe people citing an abuse of *Gran Turismo 3* as the cause of their problems will get cash handouts.

As a consequence, we've now removed all 'vibrating controllers' and now play-test all our games using non-force feedback steering wheels and lightguns. It makes playing *Metal Gear Solid 2* a bit tricky, but the risk outweighs the benefit.

PSW SAYS
SEE PAGE 22



MR MOSKEETO Become the most annoying thing ever.



LEGAGIA 2 Swirling lights, dodgy clobber etc, etc.

GET FRESH

EIDOS BRINGS THE USUAL BRAND OF FAR EAST CRAZINESS TO THE UK WITH THEIR **NEW RANGE OF JAPANESE GAMES.**

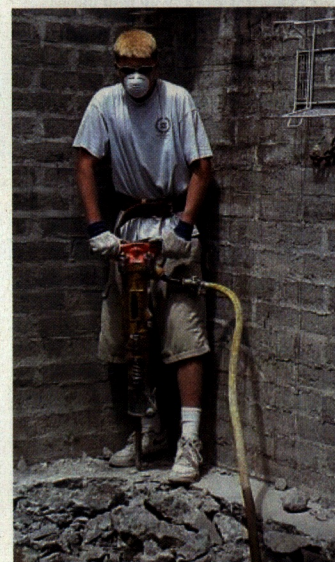
■ KERRRRR-AZY

IT'S A CRIME THAT NONE OF THOSE WEIRD dating games ever make it to these shores but things could be about to change with Eidos's new commitment to the weirder side of Japanese gaming. *Mr Moskeeto*, *Mad Maestro*, and *Legaia 2: Duel Saga* are the first three titles that will be released under the new Fresh Games banner and they're exactly what you'd expect from the land of mental gaming ideas.

Mr Moskeeto sees you playing the role of an irritating mosquito, tormenting the inhabitants of a Japanese house as they go

about their everyday business. You need to suck as much blood as possible to survive the winter and they want to swat, spray and splatter your brains with anything that comes to hand.

Mad Maestro is a *Parappa*-style rhythm game where you've got to save the Town's Concert Hall by putting on attention grabbing performances around the City. While *Legaia 2* dispense with the madness and instead takes the form of a martial arts themed 3D role-playing game. These ones should be over here by spring and expect more Jap madness and hopefully a dating game or two to follow.



SHAKING GRIEVANCE A drill, not as potent as a joypad.

PSW SAYS



SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE

Let's face some facts. Superheroes don't make good movies. You might have liked *Superman*, but that was because you were **eight years old** and cross-eyed on Fanta when you saw it. SUPER? A stilted-looking man in a red sheet? **Indiana Jones kicks his arse, special powers or not.** *Batman* sucked like a lung wound. *X-Men* was duller than Wednesdays. The list would go ON AND ON, but fortunately it stops **dead** – because Hollywood realised the truth. *Radioactive, crime-fighting men in stupid costumes went out in the 60s.* So why ARE we so enthusiastic about *Spider-Man: The Movie*? Because we've SEEN the trailer. It could be this year's summer blockbuster. The trailer's on the DVD. **WATCH IT.**

SOD OFF ROAD?

Do they think we're stupid? Do they think flooding the shelves with **near-identical** games will confuse us into buying poor ones BY MISTAKE? **How many rally games do we need?** Will this madness ever end????!!!!!! TV rally supremo Dave Richards believes he can make rallying as high profile as F1, and if PS2 is anything to go by he's ALREADY DONE IT. The shelves are set to be spattered with hordes of **identikit** titles, just as happened with F1: *WR C*, *Colin McRae Rally*, *V-Rally 3*, *Race of Champions...* and now *Pro Rally 2002*. They can't all be good. **Will you end up with the wrong one?**

WHEN JOYPADS GO BAD

We're no angels, and we all told **whoppers** when we were young. But nothing like one 15 year-old boy recently got away with. After being diagnosed with what docs call 'hand-arm vibration syndrome', the boy blamed his PS2's vibrating pad – AND EVERYONE BELIEVED HIM. **Despite the disease normally being associated with heavy industrial equipment such as road drills**, the faint wobbles – which can actually be switched off – were judged to be a RISK. Angry boffins are demanding health warnings. Could this be anything to do with his SEVEN hours-a-day habit? Or could something else entirely be taxing the wrists of a 15-year-old boy?



KAT[CH] HER IF YOU CAN
You get to play as cute Kat.

XBOX GETS A HAMMERING

IT WAS MEANT TO BE THE MASSIVE JAW DROPPER THAT ONLY THE XBOX WAS CAPABLE OF. NOW **MALICE** IS COMING TO PS2.

THUMPING

REMEMBER THE IMPACT RIDGE RACER HAD on stunned gamers when it announced the power of PSone to the world? Remember the first time you saw *GT3* in action on a PS2 and couldn't believe you were looking at a game? *Malice* was supposed to create a similar furore around the Xbox. Gamers were meant to see this gorgeous offering and think nothing else could possibly look this good on any other machine. So it kinda destroys Microsoft's big sell now that the very same title will appear on your reliably powerful PS2.

Playing as the innocent little girl Kat you have to peg it about with your hoofing great hammer and put a stop to *Malice*'s

hellish plans. Don't say it. We know, it's not exactly highbrow stuff but the story isn't really what these games are about. With its bright imaginative design *Malice* is one of those platformers that makes all the others seem pretty decrepit.

So while we get to steal their thunder, what do they get in return? A re-jigged version of *Animusha* a year after it appeared on PS2 and just when we're preparing ourselves for the breathtaking sequel. *SSX Tricky* months after we've busted every course and left it gathering dust in the corner. And a samey follow up to the Dreamcast game *Metropolis Street Racer* that blew people away at first but just leaves people feeling cheated now. Grab your PS2 and feel very contented.



WACKAWAY The best thing since Mallet's Mallet?



HAMMER TIME Is this the only tool in her oversized box?



VOODOO VILE
The years have not been kind since the heights of Live and Let Die.

WHAT THE OTHER MAGS SAY...

	PSW	PLAY	PLAYNATION	PSM2	OFFICIAL PS2
POLICE 24/7	"One of the best gun games" 7/10	"Top shooting action" 80%	Not reviewed	"flinching and crouching options work well" 39%	"few thrills and total lack of spark" 5/10
MOTO GP2	"big grids and entertaining handling" 7/10	"Virtually identical... Avoid!" 58%	"Challenging bike racer" 7/10	"Head and shoulders above the rest" 71%	"Moto GP 2 is a great game" 7/10
MONSTERS INC.	"precious little imagination" 5/10	"doesn't belong on PlayStation2" 65%	"tawdry movie merchandise" 4/10	"immensely forgettable platformer" 41%	"a shameless, spluttering sheep" 4/10

**MORE DYNAMIC BATTLES,
MORE DRAMATIC ACTION**



KESSEN II

決戦

TM



- More than 500 soldiers on screen at once
- Devastating tornado, lightning and meteor attacks
- Increased weapons, tactics and troops - even Elephant Cavalry!
- Command and control right down to squad level
- 30 new stages including sieges, sea battles and stampedes

Available March 2002



PlayStation 2

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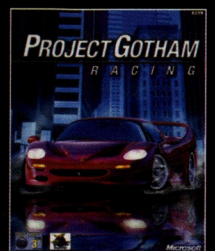


NO STYLE, NO POINTS.



Style is everything in Project Gotham Racing. Rip through traffic, pull 360's and power slide out of corners and just watch those kudos points soar. Of course, you'll also be behind the wheel of some of the most outrageously gorgeous motors around. But drive them like a Dodgem and you'll experience butt clenching crash damage. No wonder CVG magazine reckon 'its more fun than Gran Turismo 3'. Ouch.

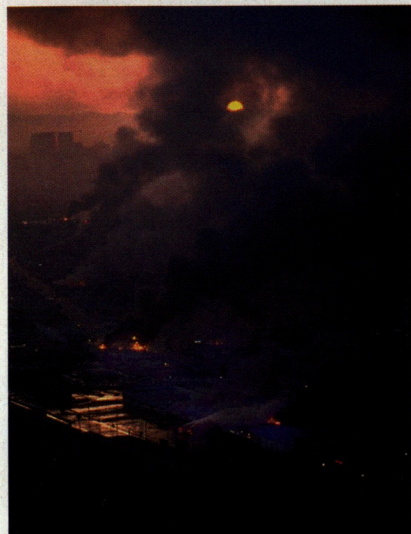
www.xbox.com/uk/projectgotham **PLAY MORE. PLAY PROJECT GOTHAM.**



Dialogue



WE'RE AWAITING YOUR QUESTIONS. WE CAN HELP, WE DO KNOW ALL ABOUT EVERYTHING...



GAMES DID IT The LA riots – caused by games, probably.

/ THE WORLD'S GONE TO HELL

In response to Stephen Pierce's review of *State of Emergency* I felt compelled to write. Gore in video-games will always be popular, and I think that is due to the developers, the media, and society at large. How? Well I feel that developers (especially Nintendo, Rare & Free Radical) who make a point not to include blood/gore in a game frustrate the game-playing public. It's not so much people want to see blood in a game, it's the fact the developers have decided to choose what we, the consumers, want to see in a game. It also seems rather two-faced to say

"Hmmm, we don't want to rely on gore to sell our games", and then make a title where people run around shooting each other's heads off with two Tommy-guns! (*TimeSplitters*). The argument whereby developers say that they can sell more games by not including blood, and thus giving games a lower BBFC rating doesn't really stand up in light of the titles topping the charts at the moment (*Silent Hill 2*, *GTA3* & *Max Payne* – all bloody & violent). The developers are really just choosing for us and thus treating us like kids, and unintentionally increasing our appetite for gory games.

Ben W, via email

I would just like to say that I think there is something wrong with your perception of what is right and what is wrong in the gaming world. When I was reading your review of *State of Emergency*, I noticed that you could not find anything wrong with it technically so you decided to slag off its moral stability. I would like to point out an important fact about "GAMES"; they are GAMES – they are not real. Whether they are based on reality or not isn't an issue either as a game is supposed to be fun and addictive. I can't start a riot in reality because it's real, however a game is not so I can quite happily murder civilians and not care. Do you know why? Because it's not real. In gameplay there is no right or wrong, just fun. Morals should never be introduced into gameplay. Also, it's an outrage that after nearly 100 percent successful reviews in your previous magazines you now start criticising morals! It is absurd and I hope censorship is never again introduced into your magazine.

Michael Butler, via email



KICK, PUNCH, IT'S ALL IN THE MIND Oh, for something intelligent.

How can you be so harsh on *State of Emergency*? If it was set in the stone age with axes instead of guns, I'm sure you guys would've loved it. Putting it in a shopping mall doesn't make it any more real – it's still just a fake video game.

Colin Crompton, Dagenham

Tis true Mr Butler, I did choose to target the moral perspective. If all one does is analyse a video game's technical merits then games will never transcend the often linear, formulaic play experience. We at PSW are broadly anti-censorship, but not in the knee-jerk, blinkered and reactionary way that has become fashionable among some young people. There is a difference between the gameplay of *GTA3* and *SOE*: *GTA3* suggests moral choice, *SOE* does not. All of us on PSW felt *SOE* exploitative, cheap and bit grubby, while *GTA3*'s complexities and effective satires rendered it a sophisticated multi-layered experience.

We would never suggest that punters shouldn't have the right to buy *SOE*. True censorship has traditionally always been the preserve of the middle-classes, dictating what and when people (of a supposedly lower social order – thus alleged stupid) can mentally imbibe. PSW was not being censorious, we denied no knowledge, we prevent no purchase; the choice is and always will be yours. Take 2 Interactive, the PR company behind *SOE*, refused to let us show any gory images in the review – preferring to conceal the content, presumably to avoid outrage. If any censorship was perpetrated then it came from the makers of the game itself. PSW is the edgiest, most honest, straight-talking video games magazine money can buy. I would suggest that Mr Butler is confusing opinion with censorship. To not print your views would be censorious. And hypocritical we ain't. SP

NEXT MONTH: THE NAKED ISSUE

Thanks for the glorious black and white photographs of the team in issue 26! My girlfriends and I have been passing the magazine around between ourselves in an attempt to work out who we fancy most. If you send us a few free games we'll tell you. Becky Murphy, Finchley

It's not going to be me. I can tell. SW

MEET YOUR EXPERTS >>



>>STEPHEN PIERCE
Ask him what goes on in all those mysterious management meetings. They have clipboards!



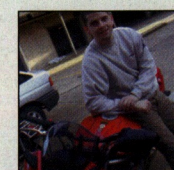
>>LEE NUTTER
Write in to ask why he only ever seems to sport one expression in all of his photos.



>>GARY CUTLACK
Ask him why he's posing with a car that plainly doesn't belong to him. Doesn't Tony mind?



>>STEVEN WILLIAMS
Ask him about those *Knight Rider* fantasies that owning a pointy black car opens up.



>>MIKEY FOLEY
Ask him how long it took his eye to get back to normal after last month's hideous 'swelling' photo.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

/ PAYNE IN THE CHARTS

How come you only gave *Max Payne* seven out of ten? It's got *Matrix*-like bullet time effects in it just like the film! Everyone likes them! They look really cool! Surely all games developers should now incorporate *Matrix*-like effects into their crappy games in order to gain the coveted number one slot and make loads of money? I bet someone at 3DO is working out how to freeze the action and make the camera spin around quickly right at this very moment. Who needs a quality assurance department when you've got spinning cameras?

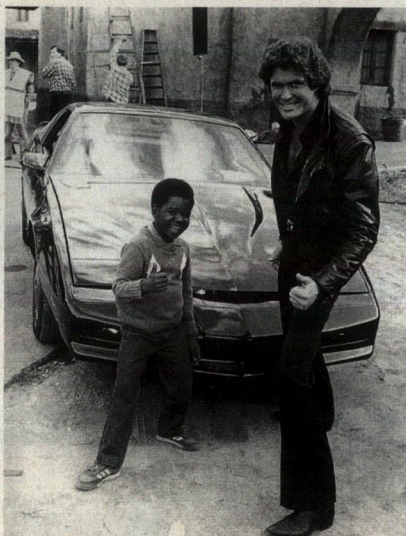
Kim Hamblyn, Durham

Max Payne got 7/10 because we found it quite short and a little boring. We're not shallow enough to be won over by fashionable special effects. Attractive female lead characters showing lots of flesh, on the other hand, are always guaranteed at least an eight. GC



TO WIN A PILE OF WILD THINGS GEAR CHECK OUT
www.wild-things.co.uk





HOT WHEELS Men and cars – together in perfect harmony.

/ THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CAR

Thanks to taking it for a test drive over the last six months in *Gran Turismo 3*, I am now the proud owner of a shiny new Audi S4. Look at me! I'm Ronin! Vroom, vroom, vroom! (I think I may now be going completely mad due to lack of money to buy food now that I have a bank debt roughly the same size as Africa's).

Iain Prince, Woodleigh

We've just bought an overhead projector for the office after playing *Rez* for the last two months. LN

/ SINS OF THE FATHER

I was just wondering whether I could get any information about PS2 sent to me because I'm thinking about purchasing one and don't know much about them. My friend has just bought one and he reckons they're great. He always buys your mag (and so do I) so he knows a lot about the games as well. I need to know what the Australian prices are (as I live here) and all the components that go with them (like the DVD controller). I was also wondering what the expansion bay on the console is used for? Could you please send the information to my email address ASAP so I can convince my father that they are a better alternative than the Dreamcast.

Ben Preece, via email, Australia

Your dad still considers Dreamcast an alternative? Does the evil man keep you nailed in the cellar? It would seem that way, such is your lack of knowledge of the outside world. The expansion bay is for a hard drive, PS2 costs about 400 of your Australian dollars. Couldn't you have found that out on the internet? MF



GRANDIA 2 Bore the hell out of some, gives others a reason to look after themselves properly.

BITS OF CRAP LETTERS

I played Phantasy Star Online for 98 hours in two weeks and ran up a £187 phone bill.
Craig Smith

I use your magazine as my bible.
Dan C

Can you please explain to me why I end up playing *Pro Evolution* until three in the morning!
Lee Woodhead

I am very hardworking, enthusiastic and forward thinking.
Deepal Matarage

If I could kill innocents in real life I wouldn't waste so much time sitting at home playing video games.
Gary Hemmings



SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO:
 Dialogue, PSW,
 Computec Media UK,
 55 Lowlands Road, Harrow,
 Middlesex HA1 3AW.
 psw@computecmedia.co.uk



/ DEAR SIR AND/OR MADAM

I'm writing to enquire whether you can update me as to the current situation regarding sales of PS2. Myself, nor anyone I know, can buy one as Sony do not appear to be shipping any out. Indeed, in HMV on Oxford Street they are as ill-informed and mystified as the general public and cannot shed any light on the matter. Bearing in mind Xbox is coming out in March, do Sony not think it might be a good idea to sell a few of their consoles first? Granted the Xbox is a lot more expensive, but not meeting supply if there is demand does not make economic sense.

Yours faithfully,
Ben Cairns, via email

Dear Mr Cairns, thank you for your letter concerning the recent poor availability of the PlayStation2 video game console. After referring with our colleagues at Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, it would appear the problem was one of a total sell-out for the machine over Christmas and well into the new year. Furthermore, it would appear that Sony delivers stock to retailers "as and when" more stock arrives, further fuelling confusion among shopkeepers. Hope this has been of some use. Please do not hesitate to contact us again should you need any further assistance in this matter. Yours sincerely, Mr Gary Cutlack, PSW.

/ I WAS INCREDIBLE

I hope I'm still eligible to enter your competition, even though my goal is on the *Winning Eleven* format. The goal I would like to submit is on slot two, and is between Holland and Brazil. After some neat, intricate passing between the Dutch midfield, a diagonal ball from right to left was sprayed some 40 yards to Edgar Davids. The little maestro pulled the ball out of the air with such aplomb and fired in a pinpoint cross into the six-yard area. The oncoming striker contorted his body and ran perfectly in relation to the flight of the ball. With one eye on the ball and the other on the lunging presence of both defender and keeper, he pivots on his standing left leg and sweetly volleys the ball with his right foot into the roof of the net. The dissection of keeper and defender was just sublime.

Trevor Jarrett, Edmonton

Good description, but it refers to a standard scissor-kick goal though, really, doesn't it? No more scissor-kick entries, please. It was impressive the first 50 times, now we demand well-worked, inspired ball control the like of which I demonstrate almost daily in the workplace. MF

/ DON'T LEAVE US OUT!

Please calm my fears! I had a hideous nightmare last night that PAL PS2 owners were going to suffer in the same way as they did with its predecessor from the (vaguely commercially excusable) practice of distributors refusing to release RPGs on this side of the Atlantic. Is it too early to say whether we stat-fiddling Brits are going to see a wider variety on our new console than we were previously allowed? Whilst I fully expect upcoming gems like *Suikoden 3*, *Star Ocean 3*, *Grandia 2*, *Summoner 2*, and a DC port *Skies of Arcadia* to put in an appearance, is there any news yet on distributors' attitudes towards the mighty *Xenosaga* [we were denied *Xenogears*], *Okage*, *Seven*, *Legaia: Duel Saga*, *Wild Arms 3*, *Shadow Hearts* and *Tsugunai* to name but a few? Surely the unavoidably colossal impact of *Final Fantasy X*'s arrival on these shores could pave the way for a more generous and courageous approach to the release of these titles? Or am I going to have to chip my PS2 as well?

Ken Pickering, Basingstoke

We don't care, we only like driving games and things with house music and flashing neon lights in. Reviewing adventure games is too hard. SW

/ SOME KIND OF DOUBLE-YOKER?

What kind of next-generation console comes with only two joystick ports, so we can have the pleasure of forking out another £30 on a multi-tap (because, surprise surprise, you can't use the old one)? The N64 was doing four ports years ago. And the memory cards with the power of "Magic Gate" – oh it's so powerful and ingenious that I can't save my original PSone games to it. That's great*. And as for the "power" of PlayStation2, I haven't seen anything yet that made me believe I had a next generation console (mainly because it isn't and was rushed out so as Sony could get some sales under its belt before the real next-gen consoles are released), apart from *GT3* [which didn't even have bot cars in two player] and *GTA3* [which sometimes looked decidedly PSone]. As for other games, first-person shooters are good [apart from the utterly dire *Agent Under Fire*] except when the game has to load up every five/ten minutes during play because the poor little PlayStation2 can't handle it! And what are loading times all about in games like *Quake 3* and *Max Payne*? Very ZX Spectrum. (*Note sarcasm).

"Big C", via email

Sarcasm noted and very much appreciated. More angry letters from bitter young men, please. Misunderstood poetry especially welcome. SW

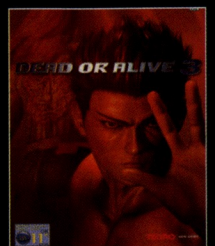


IT CAN BE HARD TO
ADJUST TO REALITY.

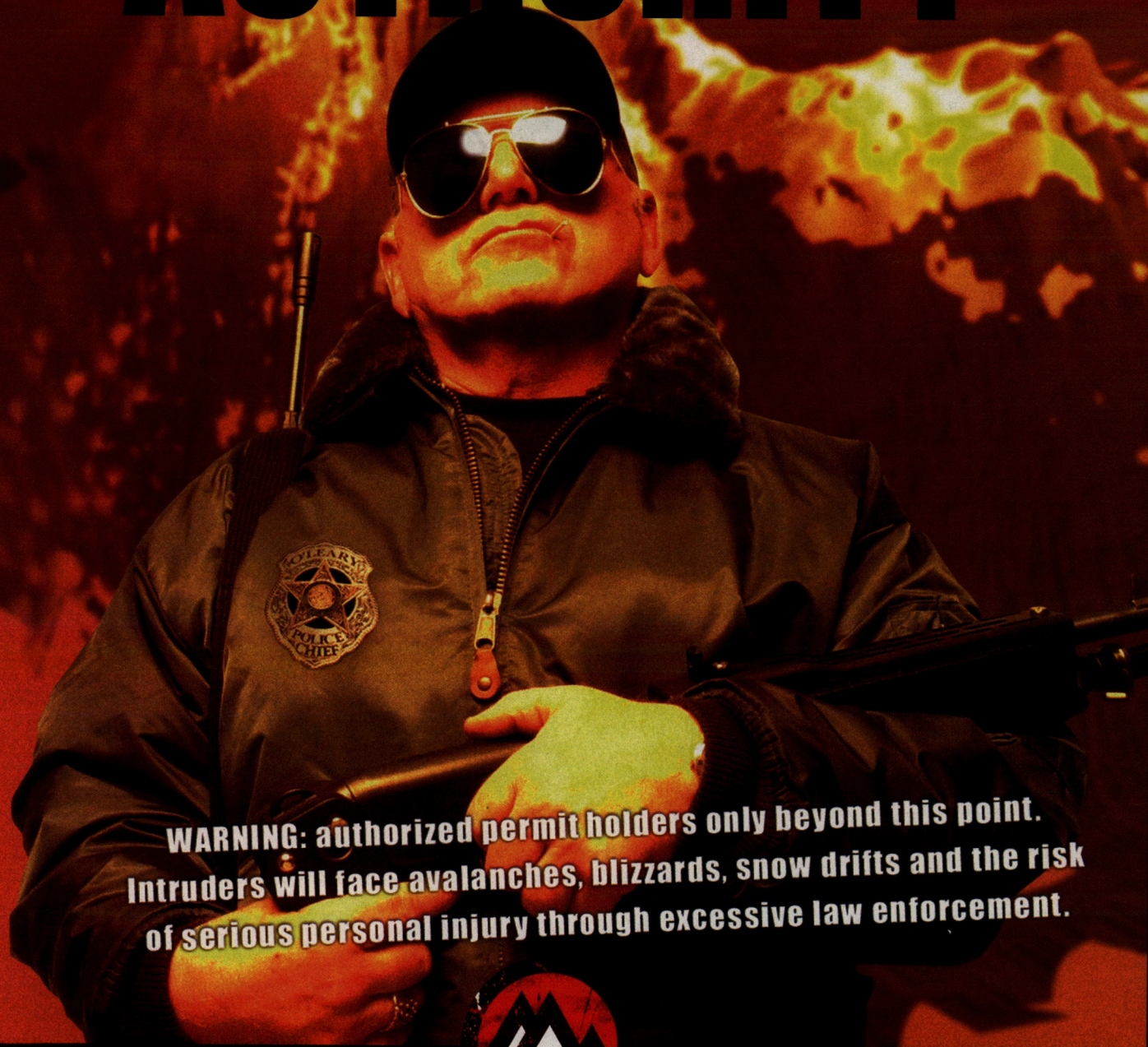


OK, so you'll think you're a black belt once you've experienced the breathtaking DOA3. Boasting multi-tiered game play, scenery that can be trashed and amongst others, two new trouser arousing characters: Christie and Hitomi. DOA3 gives other fight games a damn good kicking. So, no surprise CVG magazine reckon 'No beat'em up has ever felt as smooth and looked as sexy.' But please remember, it's a whole lot easier to kick ass on Xbox than in reality.

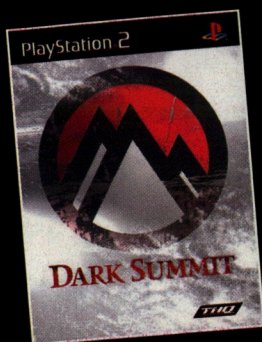
www.xbox.com/uk/doa3 **PLAY MORE. PLAY DEAD OR ALIVE 3.**



DO NOT QUESTION AUTHORITY



**WARNING: authorized permit holders only beyond this point.
Intruders will face avalanches, blizzards, snow drifts and the risk
of serious personal injury through excessive law enforcement.**



DARK SUMMIT
ACTION ADVENTURE ON THE SLOPES

PlayStation 2 XBOX

THQ

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GOING OUTSIDE NOW!

HAS TEKKEN FINALLY MET ITS MATCH? THE ALMIGHTY VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 HAS HIT PS2 IN STYLE, AND IT'S EASILY THE BEST FIGHTING GAME MONEY CAN BUY – TEKKEN 4 INCLUDED...





于喜谊由友生



福

The PSW Tekken 4 arcade machine lies silent in our games room, reduced to its separate components, practically forgotten after several months' use. Don't get us wrong, we're still looking forward to the upcoming PlayStation2 translation. With all its extra modes, new music and cool CGI video sequences, it's sure to be a good game. And Namco's promised arcade-perfect translation sounds like it'll be a great achievement. But unless Namco severely upgrades the gameplay, the company is in for something of a shock. Sega's *Virtua Fighter 4* is here and we love it. Not only is it phenomenally good, it comprehensively outquaffs *Tekken 4* in just about every conceivable way. Could this be 'Game Over' for the world's biggest selling fighting franchise?

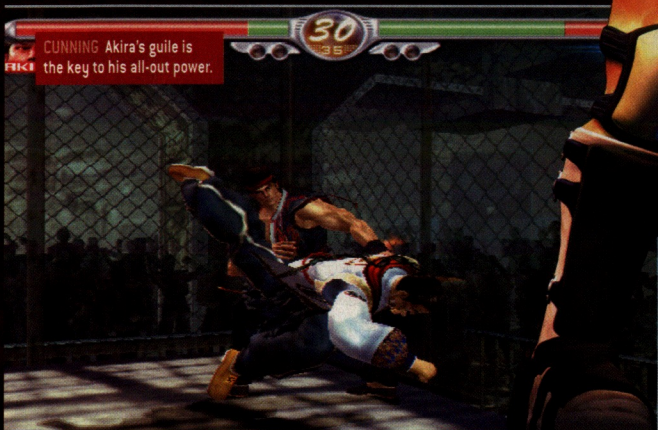
Throughout its eight-year history, there has only ever been one thing wrong with the *Virtua Fighter* games. They've only appeared on Sega consoles, thus limiting the game's potential audience while, Namco created a multi-million selling franchise in the form of the PlayStation-exclusive *Tekken* series. But now things have changed. The collapse of Sega's hardware business, and the company's move into all-formats publishing means that the most mouth-watering battle is about to commence: *Virtua Fighter 4* vs *Tekken 4*. Both on PlayStation2, both heavyweight contenders of superb quality. And much as we've enjoyed *Tekken* in the past, this time it's

Sega who have the upper hand, with dare we say it – the much better offering. But certain gamers would expect little else when the developer of *Virtua Fighter* is responsible for some of the best video games of all-time, including the legendary *Daytona USA*.

THE BIG DIFFERENCE

Although *Tekken* and the new challenger are both 3D fighting games, the truth is that they have very little in common in terms of the gameplay experience. You can quite happily own both in your collection without feeling that in effect you're buying the same game.

The truth is that *Virtua Fighter* has always been about producing a more technically realistic experience. There are no sudden on-screen flashes or explosions when hits connect, no preposterously unrealistic ten-hit combos, no appearances from devils, ogres, robots, bears or kangaroos. Each of *Virtua Fighter 4*'s 13 playable characters is the master of a firmly established real-life fighting technique or martial arts discipline, ranging from Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do, through the power of wrestling to the complex Mantis Fist. Even the ancient Roman fighting style of Pancratium gets an airing! True, there are some rather outlandish moves in there, but nothing that wouldn't be out of place in a martial arts movie.



帖喜文西由天谊



THE DETAIL IN THE FIGHTERS PUTS TEKKEN 4 TO SHAME

CUSTOMISE YOUR FIGHTER

CREATE A CHARACTER... THEN UNLEASH THE POWER!

Players have the opportunity to "adopt" a specific fighter, and then change and alter them, even creating a computer-controlled version of the 3D combatant that fights just like you do.

HOW DO I GET NEW COSTUMES?

Simply play through the Survival mode-style Kumite game variation, or against other players in Versus mode. The more victories you have, the more likely you are to receive treasure chests that contain a new costume variation or accessory.

USE YOUR FIGHTER ANYWHERE!

Once you have created and adapted your chosen brawler, you can take them into any other part of the game and use them there, especially good in two-player battles. You can even teach the PS2 to fight as you do in AI mode, then let other players battle it!



IRON LIKE A LION. Unlock new costumes and accessories.

The other big difference concerns combination attacks – there are some *Tekken*-style 'dial a combo' attacks included, but these are limited to just a few hits. The key is to integrate existing attacks together rather than rely mostly on predetermined combos thought up by the programmers. The feeling is of a game where the player feels more in control, although the less hardcore gamer might feel intimidated by this increased depth.

SO WHY'S IT BETTER?

However, differences apart, they are both still 3D fighting games, and PSW can comfortably go on record saying that *VF4* will be the premiere fighting game of choice for PlayStation2 – *Tekken 4* included. The reasons are many and varied. Put simply, *Tekken 4*'s enhancements over previous games in the series mostly come down to ideas nicked from *Virtua Fighter 3*, such as the inclusion of interactive backgrounds and uneven ground. And while it's a technical marvel, it's still *Tekken*. Essentially the same game with the same characters and moves we've been enjoying since *Tekken 2* (where things really got interesting). With that thought in mind, perhaps it's time for a change?

And what a change *Virtua Fighter 4* is. The backgrounds are far more spectacular than *Tekken 4*. The character models seem to be a lot more detailed, the range of special effects simply breathtaking. The characters have



FLOORED! A cool wall throw courtesy of Jacky Bryant.



学友新时西

NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE, VF4 IS EASILY THE BEST PLAYING FIGHTING GAME ON PS2



radically different fighting techniques – learning the nuances of each presents a far greater challenge. There may be fewer fighters, but the effort put into each shows. Arcade *Tekken 4* took less than ten months to develop. Arcade *Virtua Fighter 4* took five years. Trust us on this one, the difference is self-evident. But there's also great news for the die-hard *Virtua Fighter* fans who won't be as new to the series as the majority of PS2 owners – VF4 is far more user-friendly to play compared to its predecessor. The new moves add new dimensions to the existing characters, and the new fighters Sega AM2 has included are totally different to any that you've seen before in the series. You won't find any sons, daughters, or family relations that play like their predecessors from earlier games. 'All-new' means exactly that. New characters, new fighting techniques... new everything.

EXTRA SPECIAL FX

When *Virtua Fighter 4* was announced for PlayStation2, there was much derision from the Sega fans seemingly obsessed with the demise of Sony's machine. The original arcade machine runs on a system known as Naomi 2 – in essence, a massive upgraded Dreamcast. Surely the humble PlayStation2 couldn't cope with VF4's staggering complexity? But the fans seem to have short memories – developer Sega AM2 managed to cram both *Virtua Fighter* and its hugely improved successor into the humble Sega Saturn. These guys are the

experts in making small-scale home gaming systems perform like powerful arcade machines.

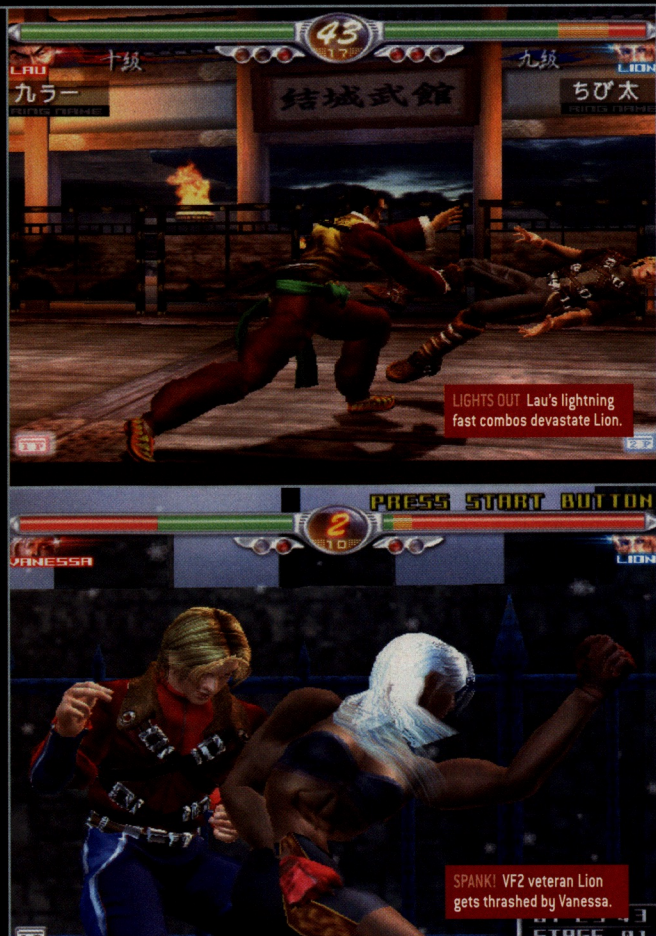
Such is the case with PlayStation *Virtua Fighter 4*. The eagle-eyed will spot some differences – a slight reduction in resolution, snow and animated leaves that aren't quite as good as the arcade. But when you consider just how close the PS2 version actually is, any nitpicking is just petty. Put simply, the effects in *Virtua Fighter 4* are spectacular. Spotlights illuminating the arena in the middle of a darkly urban cityscape look superb, fighting through snowdrifts on Aoi's castle stage are a highlight, while the dank atmosphere of the cave environment is also spot-on. The aquarium level even has fully animated fish in the background. A full 3D crowd has even been included in VF4's fight club arena. In terms of technical advances, *Virtua Fighter* is right up there with the graphical classics on PS2; another massive tick on the list of accomplishments that VF4 has managed to pull off.

THE SECRET INGREDIENT

OK, so it looks the business, has great characters and has a range of special effects that will take your breath away. So what's the secret to *Virtua Fighter 4*'s success? Put simply, it's that none of the previous things matter at all. If you had the same choice of characters and the exact same gameplay, it would still be a superb game even if it looked just like *Virtua Fighter 2* – an arcade offering created eight years ago.



先喜時先



The balance of the gameplay in *VF4* is second to none. Control is achieved using a very intuitive mixture of the joypad and just three buttons – guard, punch and kick. That keeps things very simple (although it's a little unwieldy on the PS2 control pad) and also makes the various commands simple to learn and execute.

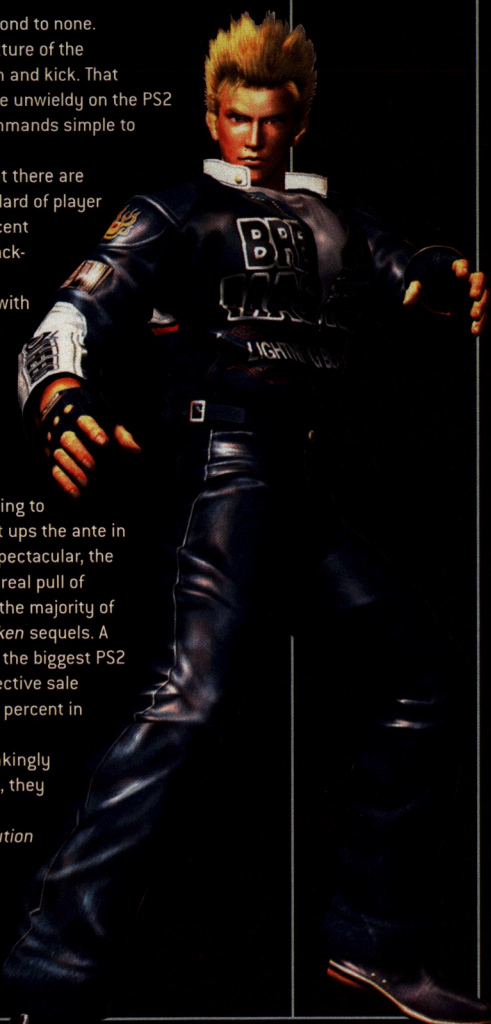
But the true genius of *Virtua Fighter* is that there are characters gauged for just about every standard of player out there. Newcomers will achieve pretty decent results by going for a swift, combination attack-driven character such as Pai Chan or Jacky Bryant. Players at the next level will do well with the larger wrestler types, while the hardcore players can take on the real challenges – mastering Akira Yuki and the best player in the game, the drunken master himself – Uncle Albert lookalike, Shun Di.

FINAL ROUND! FIGHT!

It's difficult to imagine a more startling opening to 2002 than to witness this wonderful game. It ups the ante in so many different ways – the graphics are spectacular, the gameplay satisfying beyond belief – but the real pull of *Virtua Fighter* is simply how new it will be to the majority of the target audience, weaned on a diet of *Tekken* sequels. A few months ago we hailed *Tekken 4* as being the biggest PS2 fighting game of this year. In terms of prospective sale volumes, we think we're still going to be 100 percent in the right.

But before any PlayStation2 owner unthinkingly hoovers up the latest mega franchise sequel, they should definitely try out the alternative. Hundreds of thousands of satisfied *Pro Evolution Soccer* owners proved that it's quality that counts against a big name such as *FIFA*. Try out *VF4* and compare it to *Tekken 4* in the arcades and you'll see exactly where we're coming from.

/ RICHARD LEADBETTER



VIRTUA FIGHTER: THE BASICS

A QUICK GLANCE AT THE VARIOUS FORMS OF VIOLENCE METED OUT IN VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

Virtua Fighter is the original 3D fighting game, and although the system has been tinkered, refined and expanded since the original game, the basic essence is still the same. At a very basic level, *Virtua Fighter 4* is sort of like *Tekken*, but oh-so-very different when you actually get to grips with the game's hidden depths. How does it play? Check this, and of course examine the footage on this month's PSW DVD.

// COMBINATIONS



Usually punches followed by a kick, these commands are entered in a similar fashion to the old *Tekken* 'dial a combo' technique. The Bryant siblings are the undisputed masters of this kind of technique, with Jacky (pictured above) representing the most lethal danger.

// THROWS



Throws are a set of techniques very similar to the *Tekken* games. Pressing punch and guard together with directional buttons produces different throws for each character. Characters like Jeffry McWild (pictured above) are the masters of grapple-based power.

// REVERSALS



The reversal is the cunning ability to take an opponent's attack and use it against them. Fighters like Aoi (pictured) and Akira have the potential to reverse literally any attack thrown at them. Other characters can only reverse attacks coming in at a specific height.

// CHAINED ATTACKS



A far more complex version of the basic combo is the chained attack. Multi-linked attacks are Akira Yuki's stock-in-trade. Very difficult to pull off, these are reserved for *Virtua Fighter* masters, who can nail with pinpoint accuracy the way the game's timing works.

// DOWN ATTACKS



Floored your opponent? Smack hell out of them while they're helpless. Most fighters have two attacks – one involving flying into the air and landing on your foe, the other simply punching or kicking their prone form (this is quicker, but less powerful). Very comedic and yet quite sadistic.

"THINK THE DIRTY DOZEN, THEN TAKE AWAY THREE"



MARINE LIFE The backdrops have been lovingly drawn.



COMMANDABLE The detail on the game's buildings is impressive.



NAZI LITTLE MEN Like a doll's house. With shoe polish. And guns.

COMMANDOS 2

IT'S TIME TO PULL ON YOUR BALACLAVA AND TAKE OFF YOUR UNDERWEAR: WE'RE GOING COMMANDO!

TYPE	STRATEGY
PUBLISHER	EIDOS
GAME GLANCE	
/ Guide your nine Commandos through WW2 / 12 missions in 10 unique locations / Authentic period vehicles	

FSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ The perfect blend of action and strategy
- ▲ Has an atmosphere deeper than any PS2 game

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ A steep learning curve might still put players off
- ▼ Has to get switch from mouse to joystick spot on

WE LAUGH AT THE TV SHOW FAT

Camp. We laugh and we laugh. And when we're finished laughing, we pick ourselves up off the floor, go into town and mouth the words, "Your batteries have fallen out" to people with hearing aids. We do this because we're an un-PC bunch here at PSW. In fact, so un-PC are we that even the conversion of one of last year's biggest PC strategy game fills our heart with dread. We've heard about what those ghostly-pale gamers get up to with their mice and their screwdrivers, and quite frankly we find the whole matter rather distasteful.

The conversion in question is *Commandos 2*. And the reason we're so reluctant to welcome it into the fold? It's a game harder than David Hasselhoff making love to himself in a hall of mirrors. Rumours are that the final level alone takes nigh on ten hours to complete, and that between them the fiddly controls and slow-paced play gobble up all of your patience and then belch out the bones. Thankfully, when designing *Commandos 2* for PlayStation2, developer Pyro Studios has taken all of this into account, dumbing down the control interface and offering a

comprehensive tutorial to gently lower players into this boiling vat of syrupy strategy.

The general idea is to coordinate the efforts of your nine commandos, each of whom has a unique set of skills and abilities, to the ultimate end of disrupting the Nazi war machine. You have the seductress, who can flash a little thigh to distract a guard; and the sapper, who can sneak up on the randy German and plant a charge of semtex in his army-issue drawers. You have the thief, a nimble and light-fingered operative who can pilfer a Nazi's signed photo of Anne Robinson before he knows what's hit him; and the green beret, a heavy-handed walking fist who can hit him before he knows he's been robbed. *Commandos 2* is all about working as a team, and from Whiskey the dog to James the diver, everyone has their part to play [see panel].

But even with this squad of highly skilled individuals, successfully completing the 12 weighty missions will be no mean feat. The guards in *Commandos 2* are smarter than your average goons and always endeavour to hunt you down and hurt you, usually in well-organised packs. Leaving footprints in the snow, bodies in the dirt or

the sound of gunfire hanging in the air gives you away in an instant, so keep your head down and be sure to pack plenty of cough medicine. In *Commandos*, as in *Metal Gear*, the most effective approach is always the stealthiest. That's not to say that you have to adopt the carpet slipper approach however, for the missions encourage you to be pragmatic and to use whatever means necessary. If you feel like making a little noise and spitting out a few shells once in a while, just do it. Then brace yourself as full might of the Third Reich goosesteps angrily towards you, left foot first. At this juncture it might be a wise idea to hotwire whichever of the authentically modelled WW2 vehicles is closest to you, whether it be the puny Willys Jeep, the hulking Panzer tank or the unwieldy Mercedes L3000 truck.

IF LOOKS COULD KILL

On its way to becoming one of the biggest selling and most highly respected strategy series of all time, *Commandos* established a reputation for graphical excellence. Suffice to say, its console debut doesn't disappoint. The hand-drawn backgrounds are magnificent, with an attention to



THE THIN RED THUMB The gameplay is tough but satisfying.



TANKED UP All of Commandos' vehicles look and feel spot on.



SPY GAME The spy can mingle freely with the enemy.

detail that casts a shadow over anything yet seen on PS2. The game can be viewed from four angles and there's a handy zoom function, which, we hasten to add, looks better here than it does on the PC version. Whether it be a leafy compound in deepest darkest Thailand, an authentic replica of Colditz or a vast chunk of downtown Paris, complete with Eiffel tower, *Commandos 2* always looks rich, solid and impressive.

SCREEN-SPLITTERS

As mentioned earlier, one of most significant differences between the PC and PS2 versions is that the controls have been given a major overhaul. Gone is the point-and-click mouse interface used in the original, replaced with a system that allows the player direct control over their character. Not only does this make the game more immediate and more intuitive, it speeds up the play and helps to tip the balance in favour of action over strategy. And if you're still finding it all too much to bear, you can team up with a comrade and share the burden of a campaign in the cooperative mode. *PSW* is pumped – not to mention a little ripped – at the prospect of two players simultaneously taking on

the loathsome Nazi menace, although those with tiny TVs might need to invest in magnifying glasses to have any chance of enjoying the split-screen action.

After giving *Commandos 2* a thorough inspection, we can confidently predict massive things from a game that looks set to expand the horizons of PlayStation2 singlehandedly. Those of you whose brains are gradually eroding as wave upon wave of moronic software crashes down and washes over your grey matter, take note: a rescue operation is underway, and those plucky *Commandos* are leading the line.

/ JON BROWN

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

Commandos 2 made a big splash when it debuted on the PC a few months back, and after undergoing some serious fine-tuning, it looks a dead cert to have an impact every bit as significant this time around. Hopefully this arrival signals the beginning of more top-drawer action-strategy games making their way onto the Playstation 2.



WORLD AT WAR We're guessing this section isn't set in North Africa.

THE NINE LIVES

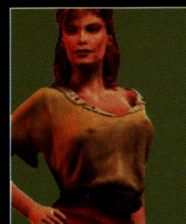
A PROFILE OF THE COMMANDOS AT YOUR DISPOSAL...



NAME: Paul "Lupin" Toledo
OCCUPATION: The agile and skilled thief.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Wept like an open sore when Leo died in *Titanic*, eventually slipping into a coma.



NAME: Francis "the Duke" Wookridge
OCCUPATION: The deadeye marksman.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Still believes that women wee out of their bottoms. Once played air sitar in school band.



NAME: Natasha Nikochevski
OCCUPATION: The alluring distraction.
EMBARRASSING FACT: One of the very first 'Ratfans' to enlist in the elite Kevin the Gerbil Mega-Club.



NAME: James "Fins" Blackwood
OCCUPATION: The deep sea diver.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Dancing style isn't so much two-left feet as *My Left Foot*. Quite likes Jamie Oliver.



NAME: Jack O'Hara
OCCUPATION: The Green Beret.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Sleeps with men for money. Uses the funds to buy blank videos, onto which he records the sci-fi show *Lexx*.



NAME: Thomas "The Fireman" Hancock
OCCUPATION: The explosives expert.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Got over-excited when he met Chuck Norris and told him that he was greater than Ali.



NAME: Rene "Frenchy" Duchamp
OCCUPATION: The undercover operative.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Lives in the toe of a giant leather boot with his grandmother. Also hung like an amoeba.



NAME: Whiskey
OCCUPATION: The guard dog.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Won't rule out voting for Iain Duncan Smith in the next election, "provided the policies are in place."



NAME: Samuel "Wheels" Brooklyn
OCCUPATION: The getaway driver.
EMBARRASSING FACT: Has recurring dream that he's David Blane. Disappointed when he realises he isn't.



BLOODSUCKER It's gruesome but it needs to be done to stay alive.



FIGHT CLUB That's what you get for touching his lever.

"BEING BAD HAS NEVER BEEN SO GOOD"



IN SUPPLY Check out the lengthier blood bar. The further you progress the bigger they become.

ETA
APRIL
2002

BLOOD OMEN 2

STRIPPED OF HIS POWERS AND LEFT FOR DEAD KAIN'S OUT FOR BLOOD. AS MUCH OF THE OOZING LIQUID AS HE CAN FIND.

TYPE	ACTION ADVENTURE
PUBLISHER	EIDOS
GAME GLANCE	/ Suck blood to survive / Learn to use six super natural vampire powers / Intelligent townsfolk who react to your actions

FSW PROPHECY

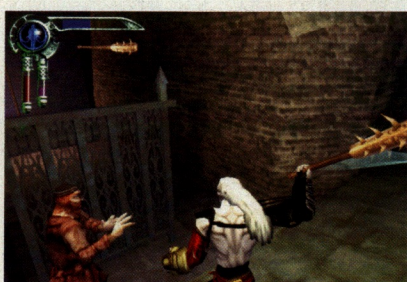
BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ Being bad is so very good. A vicious delight!
- ▲ The controls and moves are easy to master

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ The world is still a little too empty in places
- ▼ It's certainly not a game for the squeamish

SOUL REAVER 2 COULDN'T DO IT. *Project Eden* tried and failed. And as you can see on page 100, *Shadowman Zecond Coming's* valiant attempt was still unable to offer anything revolutionary or blindingly new over the five-year-old *Tomb Raider* games in the world of third-person action adventuring. Next in line is *Blood Omen 2*, the follow up to *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* and the relative of *Soul Reaver 1&2*. (See panel) Is this the game to finally inhabit its environments with



PLEASE! Innocent victims show genuine fear before you kill them.

more than just predictable enemies, populating the world with a tangible feeling of realism and life and ridding us of all that belief-suspending emptiness? If not we're all in for a very brief gaming experience because Kain will be dead before you've had the chance to hustle your girlfriend upstairs to watch *Eastenders* on the spare telly.

Unlike Raziel from the *Soul Reaver* games, Kain is a fully functioning vampire. To survive he needs a regular supply of blood and it's the local inhabitants that unsuspectingly provide Kain's sustenance. Without these poor unfortunates Kain wouldn't have the chance to demonstrate why being bad is so very good. And from our first play of this tantalisingly evil game we can safely say that you're not going to need to pay regular visits to the local A&E for your life sustaining transfusions.

It's not exactly bustling but it does a much better job of conveying a proper world that doesn't just exist for your benefit. Insignificant characters wander about oblivious to your tribulations, chatting to each other and acting just like the carefree bit players they are. You can choose to ignore these feeble innocents as you wander past

or sidle over for a quick bite whenever you're feeling a little bloodthirsty.

Be warned, if the sight of blood causes you to go weak at the knees like those fainting kids at school when the BCG injections are dished out you'd be advised to steer well clear of this game. There's more flowing claret in Meridian (Nosgoth's capital) than on a Saturday night in Newcastle following a Sunderland match. *Blood Omen 2* doesn't just let you be the bad guy; it positively encourages you to revel in your sadistic evilness.

KAIN YOU KILL IT?

Victims can be lifted off the ground by the throat, dangled gasping for air before being flung to the floor in a crumpled heap. Kain's claws are always on hand to tear enemies to shreds while items found lying around can be used to club, slice and stab anyone who gets in his way.

Having woken up 200 years after the Sarafan Knights had almost finished him off in a desperate struggle between his vampire legions and the defenders of humanity, Kain is initially devoid of any special powers. As you progress, Kain's unique

WHAT THE HELL?

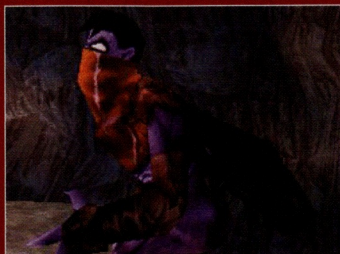
CONFUSED? WE DON'T BLAME YOU. THE BLOOD OMEN/ SOUL REAVER WORLD OF GAMES IS BLOODY DIFFICULT TO KEEP TRACK OF. LET PSW MAKE THINGS A LITTLE CLEARER.



/ BLOOD OMEN: THE LEGACY OF KAIN PSONE

TYPE – Top-down RPG
MAIN CHARACTER – Kain
TIMESCALE – Where it all begins

Attacked in a bar late at night, Kain, the traveller, is murdered. Luckily for him the necromancer Mortanius gives him the chance to return to Nosgoth as a vampire and wreak revenge on his assailants. His new existence also creates something of a dilemma as he begins to enjoy his powerfully murderous persona leading to a choice between good and evil.



/ LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER PSONE

TYPE – Tomb Raider-style 3D cavernous action adventure
MAIN CHARACTER – Raziel
TIMESCALE – 1000 years after Legacy of Kain

Having chosen to rule Nosgoth, Kain and his vampire lieutenants gradually evolve new powers until one of his crew, Raziel, grows wings before him. Infuriated by this Kain rips them from his back and jealously banishes him to his doom. Luckily for Raziel he's saved by the mysterious Elder God and sets about ridding the world of the vampires.



/ SOUL REAVER 2 PS2

TYPE – Action-adventuring in pretty empty locations
MAIN CHARACTER – Raziel
TIMESCALE – All over the place but mostly into the past

After following Kain through the time travelling portal at the end of *Legacy of Kain*, *Soul Reaver*, Raziel pursues him into the unknown and surfaces in Nosgoth's past. Interacting with characters from the past two games it uncovers the stories behind the vampire genocide, the ancient races and the battle between Kain, Moebius and Raziel.



/ BLOOD OMEN 2 PS2

TYPE – 3D act/adv with more populated environments
MAIN CHARACTER – Kain
TIMESCALE – 400 years after Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain

This one follows on directly from *Blood Omen* so it occurs before the trials and tribulations of Raziel. Kain wants to use his legion of vampires to take control of Nosgoth. In a battle with the Sarafan Knights (the defenders of humanity against vampires) Kain is defeated and left for dead, awaking 200 years later bent on revenge against the Sarafan Knights.

vampiric abilities gradually return enabling him to grow more powerful. One of the first skills to return is his ability to disappear whenever it turns misty. It's then possible to sneak up on enemies and dispose of them with a decapitating blow to the head or a knife right through the chest. You can even put your arm clean through their body and rip out their heart before dropping it in front of them.

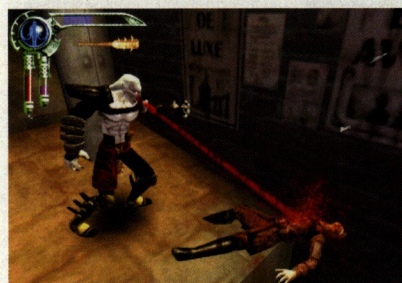
RAZIEL SHARP

As each ability is discovered, so the game becomes more challenging and consequently more elaborate. Initial puzzles revolve around defeating the vampire barriers that the Knights have erected to protect the innocent townsfolk from sadistic killers like you. But discover the super jump power and suddenly whole new previously inaccessible areas open up to present even more conundrums.

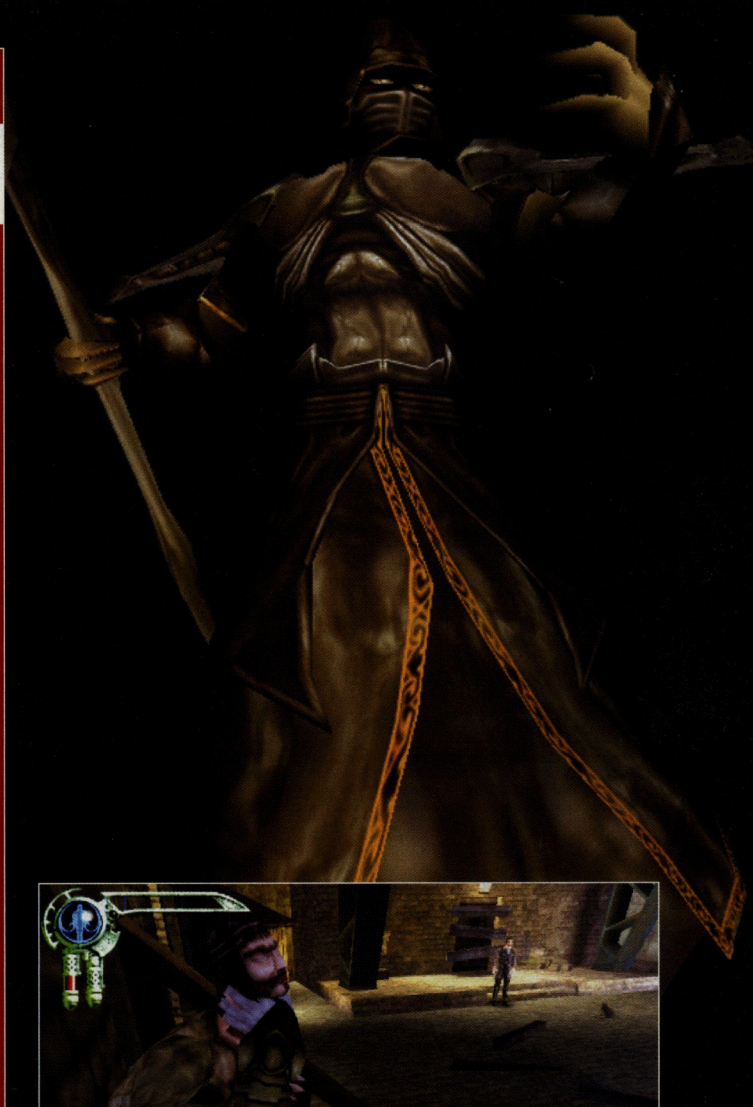
A welcome injection of variety and player choice is the need to switch between brutal violence and more considered stealth. The local populace will ignore your presence if you give them nothing to tweak their attention and enemies can be much more vulnerable if you catch them off guard. Of

course, there are still times when lashing out like a spoilt kid mid tantrum is your only viable course of action. However, having to think your way through certain situations injects some very welcome diversity into the repetitive block pushing, switch pulling, samey combat cycle we've grown so tired of in previous games of this type.

Another feature that makes playing this game a delight rather than a chore is the simple yet intuitive controls. A neat target locking feature avoids any of the confused flailing about that



BLOOD LUST Tomato soup always made him projectile vomit.



CHOKER HOLD Grab victims by the neck and strangle them to death.

blighted *Project Eden*'s combat, and defending yourself is not only fair but also very rewarding. Block enough blows to fill up your rage bar and you can activate your lethal fury attack. Jumping is a cinch, pinpoint leaps of faith have gone the same way as Steps and pixel perfect alignment is no longer required to pull switches or push blocks.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

Blood Omen 2 finally looks like putting the fun back into action-adventures. Where other games seem content to repeat bad ideas and features that were a chore when they first appeared years ago, *BO2* concentrates more on letting the player enjoy the experience rather than having to get to grips with lazy design. But most importantly the whole premise is brimming with exciting possibilities. Everyone wants to play the bad guy and this is why. Is the third-person action-adventure poised to take its first tentative steps into the 21st century? Let *Blood Omen 2* light the way.

"HIT MEN WITH STICKS. MEN FALL OVER. AND REPEAT."



LORD OF THE TWATS Michael Flatley went avant garde.

ETA
APRIL
2002



THE CHANGING OF THE GUARDS Transformed from alive to dead.



EVE OF EXTINCTION

IT'S THE LATEST GAME FROM THE WWF SMACKDOWN! PEOPLE – AND THERE ISN'T A STITCH OF LYCRA IN SIGHT!

TYPE FIGHTING

PUBLISHER EIDOS

GAME GLANCE

- Seven levels to explore and take to pieces
- Dozens of enemies to beat to a pulp
- The range of Star Wars-style weapons is good

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ Lots of things to see and beat the crap out of
- ▲ It doesn't have much competition on the PS2

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ The genre's legacy is weak to say the least
- ▼ It looks average and the gameplay looks.... average

"FROM THE PEOPLE THAT BROUGHT

you *SmackDown! Just Bring It!*" is how *Eve of Extinction* may be marketed in an

alternate universe, if, that is, it's a universe where PS2 *SmackDown!* was received more enthusiastically than it was with the lukewarm reviews it got in our dimension. Yukes are the Japanese fight fans responsible for both the *SmackDown!* series and *EoE*, only with their newest project they've chosen to reject bulky men with shawn chests and opt for the second most popular option taken by developers – science going wrong in the future.

So how good is Yukes at developing original, non-licensed games all by itself and with no help from a WWF-employed adult? Can it do better than the good-but-not-great man-grapple game? Should we fear for their future ability to feed and clothe their families? Will a game starring a man who looks like a pre-haircut-

obsession David Beckham with a lightsabre succeed in capturing our hearts? And who is that nice looking blonde girl in the short skirt, is she single, what are her hobbies, does she have a boyfriend, is it serious and would she consider dumping him to go out with a badly paid games journalist?

APOCALYPSE NOW... PLEASE

"Roaming 3D beat 'em up" is press release phrase that fills us with worry, as there's never been such a game that you'd ever describe as 'good' (see *The Bouncer*, or *Fighting Force* on PSone if your memory stretches back that far). And in every instance the same problem – the inability to lock onto your desired target when several enemies are on screen – is their downfall. *Eve of Extinction* seems to suffer from this too, but such whinges have never stopped scrolling fighting games from seizing substantial portions of you lot's spare cash.

But why the violence in the first place? Glad you asked. The character you play, Josh, discovers his employers are attempting to create a weapon of mass destruction – The Legacy – by fusing the human soul with crystal. Upon learning of their evil intent, Josh does the decent thing and legs it with his girlfriend, before getting captured, experimented on, escaping (we're paraphrasing now), then attempting to save his girl and, of course, the world. The sheer absurdity of the plot is there for all to see – we don't need to pass comment on it further. But, according to a recent survey, plots count for this: nowt.

In gameplay terms *EoE* translates roughly to this: beat the living daylight out of everyone and everything that has the misfortune to stumble into your path. It rarely gets more complicated. A vague puzzle element has been worked into the mix, but it forms such a minuscule part of the game that it barely deserves a mention. Hit men with stick. Men fall over. Repeat. You win.

While exacting violent revenge on your former employer (industrial tribunals can drag on for months – this way is much better), it's wise to pick up some of the power crystals carelessly strewn around the place. Not just for decorative effect, the crystals also upgrade your Legacy weapon,





MY LEGACY I want to be remembered as the man who tried to fly using a couple of car doors.



ARMAGEDDON OUT OF HERE? Once we've smacked up Daft Punk, we'll sort out The Prodigy.

enabling it to morph into several different forms. Dependent on which crystals have been collected, the Legacy can be used as a sword, whip and axe, and has the ability to freeze time, reverse gravity and fire projectiles. Perhaps the best weapon we came across was the *Star Wars*-style lightsabre, with which we had great fun pretending to be Luke Skywalker, but the lack of swish-swoosh sound effects and rapidly depleting novelty value ensured the pleasure was short-lived.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Lack of longevity could be a problem for *Eve of Extinction* – we're told to expect seven levels in the finished game. And, like the recent *SmackDown!* game, the graphics aren't exactly its strongest point. True enough, there's a liberal sprinkling of weapon effects, but we found the environments and enemies to be rather bland and lifeless. It's early days, we must stress, so still some time remains before we'll know if the 'Roaming 3D beat 'em up' curse has struck again. We'll cast an appraising eye over the finished game next month.

/ LEE NUTTER

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

Eve of Extinction is strange. The *SmackDown!* connection is bound to arouse some interest in the thing, but if we're honest the story seems a little too unoriginal to be of particular interest, while the roaming/fighting aspect is as familiar and recognisable to us as a nice cup of tea. There's little in the way of new ideas in *Eve...* but even unoriginal games can be nice if properly done.

It's a game_
You play to make music_
You play to create visuals_
It's like being in **your** own club_
Every night at **your** place_

RezaTM

Mondays
Main room
You (resident)
Your mate
Dave
(6 hour set)

Saturdays
Main room
You (resident)
Your girlfriend
Her sister
Lucy

Tuesdays
Main room
You (resident)
Your mate
Dave
His mate
Chris

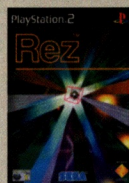
Sundays
Main room
You (resident)
(10 hour sob set)

Wednesdays
Main room
You (resident)
Your girlfriend
Dave again

Thursdays
Main room
You (resident)
Dave's mate
Chris
Your mate
Mike

Fridays
Main room
You (resident)
Your mate
Mike
Chris is back

Dress: Whatever_
Admission: £39.99 / NUS £39.99 SRP_



supported by **PlayStation.2**
THE THIRD PLACE

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uk.playstation.com

"THERE'S KLINGONS, FERENGIs, ROMULANS AND THE BORG ON THE STARBOARD BOW"

ETA
APRIL
2002

STAR TREK VOYAGER ELITE FORCE

COME BACK! IT'S STAR TREK JIM, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT.

TYPE	SHOOTING
PUBLISHER	CODEMASTERS
GAME GLANCE	
/ Real voices of Janeway, Tuvok and the Doctor / Four-player split-screen / Combination of stealth and gung-ho gaming styles / Authentic federation and alien weapons / Plenty of decision-making	

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ The single-player game completely draws you in
- ▲ Incredibly authentic with a wonderful narrative

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ The multiplayer mode still needs some improving
- ▼ Seven of Nine is still just an animated character

STAR TREK ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE

regarded as the inferior sibling to *Star Wars*. Maybe it's the memory of the flimsy 60's cardboard sets, William

Shatner metamorphosing into TJ Hooker or the whole Trekkie phenomenon that just don't seem as cool as Darth Vader, lightsabres, and Jedi Knights. It's a harsh assumption that doesn't quite seem fair any more. The Borg are just as scarily imposing as Stormtroopers, and Seven of Nine conjures up equally as many fantasies as Princess Leia in her bikini. And nothing in the world of *Star Trek* annoys at anything like the levels of bile generating, fist thumping, hair-pulling hatred as Jar Jar Binks. Now there's one more reason to cease giving *Star Trek* such a hard time with the creation of one of the most promising shooters on PS2.

Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force is the latest attempt to bring the drama and dilemma of the shows to the world of games. It appeared on PC to a wealth of accolades and awards last year, and is now being finally transported to PS2 with some tempting additions materialising along the way.

Created by one of the show's writers, the story behind your escapades is a totally new tale that impressively incorporates just about everything that we've come to expect from the best *Voyager* episodes. It features every adversary from the *Star Trek* universe, and some you've never witnessed until now, with interaction with all of the significant members of the crew including the ability to silence the irritating Neelix. However, that kind of heartless if satisfying murder will only result in the termination of your fledgling career.

SPACE, THE... OH, WRONG SERIES

The game begins in the customary *Star Trek* fashion with an initial perplexing situation that soon reveals the true implications of your predicament. The opening credits soon roll and you're into the real meat of this overwhelming mess. It's an impressive intro that immediately grabs hold of your attention and endeavours to never let go until all aggressors have been repelled, all crew have been rescued and Voyager is safely restored to her endless search for home.

The dilemma this time is that Voyager has been trapped in some mysterious uncharted space scrapyard, and without a power source there's no means of escape. As a member of the away team it's down to you, ensign Monroe, and your crewmates to search the surrounding floating hulks for a means of escape. Unfortunately not all of these hulks are uninhabited and a deadly amalgamation of scavengers comprising numerous alien races have taken to raiding vessels for riches.



A BRIDGE TOO PHWOAR This is where you can locate Seven of Nine.



KLINGIN TO LIFE Blast this one and nick his gun, it's bigger.



WATCH HER BACK Protect your team on away missions.



CRIME TRAVEL The holodeck can conjure up historical conflicts.



STOP BORGIN' US It's good to have all the familiar oddballs.

The variety of adversaries is a clever gameplay device, as it creates numerous situations where your approach needs to be evaluated before you dive in all guns blazing. For instance, infiltrating a Klingon stronghold to try to purloin a power source from under their noses is probably best achieved through stealth rather than inviting a horde of phlegm spraying Neanderthals to pursue your ass through the claustrophobic corridors.

And then there are the numerous times when it's not just your own self-preservation you've got to consider. As a member of the elite Hazard team you're joined by a select band that provide back-up and extra fire power but just as easily get zapped, trapped and vaporised. It's a unique feeling having to consider the fate of others while you're battling



PLAYING AWAY Fellow Federation officers will battle gallantly.



COLLECTIVE HARM Hit them quickly before they assimilate you.

against ever increasing odds. It's also particularly emotional when one of your close-knit unit takes a fatal hit; try to refrain from falling to your knees and screaming at the heavens in anguish just yet, everything isn't always as it seems.

SITTING DUCKS OF HAZARD

With this level of interaction comes one of *Elite Force*'s most effective techniques in truly involving the player within this tangibly real environment. There are subsidiary events throughout where an unexpected accident will occur and you're the closest at hand to rescue someone from a nasty predicament. Or a surprise twist in a mission will arise out of the blue without ever breaking the pace of the game through intrusive story cut-

A TIMESPLITTERS BEATER?

THE PURSUIT OF MULTIPLAYER BLASTING IS A BALANCING ACT OF SPEED AND VISUAL QUALITY

/ QUAKE 3 REVOLUTION

In the pursuit of speed, the graphics in this game were toned down somewhat when converted from PC, resulting in an ever so slightly confusing game with too much going on and visuals that can be a little murky.



VERDICT:
QUICK, BUT NO STUNNER

/ TIMESPLITTERS

The perfect blend of crystal clear visuals and lightning fast gameplay. This is due to the removal of any extraneous clutter and needlessly intricate graphical details that would only serve to hamper the game's speed.



VERDICT:
ELEGANTLY SWIFT

/ UNREAL TOURNAMENT

In trying to cram everything from the PC game into the PS2 version, the developer lost the speed that made it so much fun. Instead PS2 owners ended up with a jerky mess that failed to entertain because of technical shortcomings.



VERDICT:
LUMBERING EYESORE

/ STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE

It cleverly uses the holodeck as its foundation, enabling the creation of levels based on absolutely anything. It looks great with imaginatively varied environments, but it could still do with an extra injection of speed.



VERDICT:
GOOD LOOKING BUT A BIT SLOW

scenes. Instead everything occurs as you play and usually when you least expect it.

Furthermore Tuvok will regularly pull you aside to comment on your performance or criticise your actions. Seven of Nine will join you on some missions to take charge and chastise you for any errors of judgement you make. And you can even wander the ship, ear wiggling crew conversions or pestering senior crew members. *Elite Force* manages to capture that unique *Star Trek* feel and transport you right into the thick of it. So much so that you can almost feel the resolute aura of strained feminine dominance when Janeway gives an order and touch those impossibly tight Seven of Nine suits just to see if they're not painted on.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

This game oozes 100 percent *Star Trek* from every bulkhead. It's a Trekkie's ultimate dream, apart from the one involving Seven of Nine, Dax, Troi, and Dr Crusher. Even if you're not enamoured with snugly fitting Federation uniforms or men with pasties on their head, beneath this authentic *Voyager* exterior lies a first class shooter. *Elite Force* has the potential to draw even the most ardent sci-fi objector into a stylishly crafted blasting adventure.

"IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT, AND I FEEL... OW!"



ETA
MARCH
2002

ENDGAME

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! RELOAD! BANG! BANG! BANG...!
OH, HAPPY DAYS... BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! RELOAD!

TYPE	LIGHTGUN SHOOTER
PUBLISHER	EMPIRE
GAME GLANCE	
/ Over 20 levels	
/ Alternate endings	
/ Cinematic aspirations	
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Those damn security guards getting it mortally	
/ Fighting on a moving train	
/ And the dying comes in waves	

IT SEEMS THERE'S ONE THING

Hollywood and the games industry are entirely agreed upon – in the future, everything will be bad. In recent years, the threat has shifted from obvious sources like evil dictators, atomic bombs and invading aliens to more subtle ones... if you can call enormous corporations subtle, that is. This time it's EuroDream, purveyors of Virtual Reality technology and, presumably, blessed with an advertising department so gifted it can make lumpy black goggles the size of a corrective shoe into an indispensable item. If you've seen Mr

Foley's picture on page eight of issue 25, you'll understand what an achievement that is.

But now everybody's hooked on VR life, and reality and fantasy is becoming horribly obscured. The people are dangerously pacified, unable to think for themselves, drowned in the syrup of fictional televised lives. And this is the future, right? Anyway, playing as Jade, you must hunt down and perforate those responsible for certain things that should never have happened... untangle the web of lies, as it were, until you're left with one big thin line of lies, which you can then roll up into a coil of lies and put in your pocket.

Along the way you travel a variety of European locations, spread across the streets and buildings of Germany, France and Switzerland. You even venture onto a train in the Channel Tunnel – where you must presumably avoid the crowds of illegal immigrants being wrestled to the ground by the Foreign Secretary while simultaneously attempting not to die because the carriage is on fire – and onto a cable car in the Alps.

Bad shots bring joy in the form of impressively frangible scenery, as plates, windows and all manner of innocent objects shatter when hit. Your opponents make this eventuality all the more likely by having a variety of attacks from which to choose, instead of always doing the same thing – something that should significantly increase



BACK ON THE CHAIN GUN Dodge this, then. Better be quick.

replay value. Ironically, however, the replayability factor is less important than in other lightgun games, because it's actually got more than three stages – over 20, in fact. The accuracy and effectiveness with which you go about your retribution affects the storyline too, further improving its longevity. Your performance directly influences the branching paths of the story, so replaying with less collateral damage and more cold-hearted headshots garners new endings. Not bad for a genre that usually provides 20 minutes with some ninjas behind a crate.

Naturally it's compatible with the new G-Con 2, and although there are some quality titles around – *Vampire Night* and *Time Crisis 2*, for instance – you're no more than two hours from finishing both, even if you haven't got them yet. Should you add *EndGame* to your list of must haves? Watch out for our review and find out.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

Whatever adjectives you use to describe the lightgun games on PS2 so far, 'long' and 'varied' won't be among them. So *EndGame*'s 20-plus levels, unpredictable AI and branching storyline are welcome – and we'll soon find out if they work. But it's looking good so far.



CRATE TO SEE YOU It simply wouldn't be shooting without them.

HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE IS YOU.



"AND THEY THOUGHT IT WAS ALL OVER"

ETA
APRIL
2002



HOLE IN ONE Set-pieces use a golf-style power and swing bar.



BETTER UP CLOSE The player models are some of the best yet.



HENRY MUST SCORE... Shots are struck with real venom.

ISS 2

PES ISN'T GOING TO HAVE THINGS ALL ITS OWN WAY. NOT WHEN KONAMI HAS A NEW ISS GAME IN THE WORKS.

TYPE FOOTBALL

PUBLISHER KONAMI

GAME GLANCE

/ 58 international teams
/ Commentary from Jon Champion and Mark Lawrenson
/ Real player likenesses and proper names
/ Atmospheric stadium announcements
/ All the usual cups and tournaments

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE A

golfer and you see Tiger Woods' name on the starting list? Or the gun goes for the start of a 400m race and all you can see is Michael Johnson's gold shoes disappearing into the distance? Do you admit defeat and stomp off like a spoilt kid, or try something different to help you escape such an all-encompassing shadow?

Since the release of *Pro Evolution Soccer*, this is a situation that's faced every football game developer. FIFA, UEFA Champions League, This is Football and International League Soccer have all failed to topple PES. Despite all those attempts, we're now in the bizarre situation that sees Konami

offering up the strongest challenge to its own champion. Although it's from the same parent company, ISS 2 is being put together by a different development team. Sensibly, it's pitching it as an alternative rather than a PES-beater.

Despite our undoubted love of PES, a love that sees it occupying every PS2 in the office whenever there's a spare moment, we have to admit that it can be quite daunting for newcomers. ISS 2 on the other hand dismisses a number of the intricate PES elements, such as the necessity in getting the ball under control following a pass, in favour of a much more approachable and forgiving affair.

In this way it immediately sets itself up as the footy game for those who want more immediate

thrills and a more arcade feel. Strategy plays less of a part in ISS 2, as can be seen from the less complex team set-up screens.

However, the overall feel is reassuringly similar to PES and retains that comforting familiarity. Buttons are the same, the simple things remain just that, so that they never intrude on your enjoyment, and banging one in the onion bag is still endlessly exhilarating.

ISS 2 notches up a few points over PES thanks to its more convincing player likenesses (witness Mr Beckham for example), and also with much improved commentary thanks to Jon Champion and Mark Lawrenson, who both sound genuinely involved and add to the excitement and tension. In addition, the stadiums' PA systems echo to the voice of the announcer whenever goals are scored or substitutions are made. And player animations are of a similar high quality with shots on goal looking even more powerful.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



SAMBA MAGIC Play as Brazil for an easy introduction to the game.

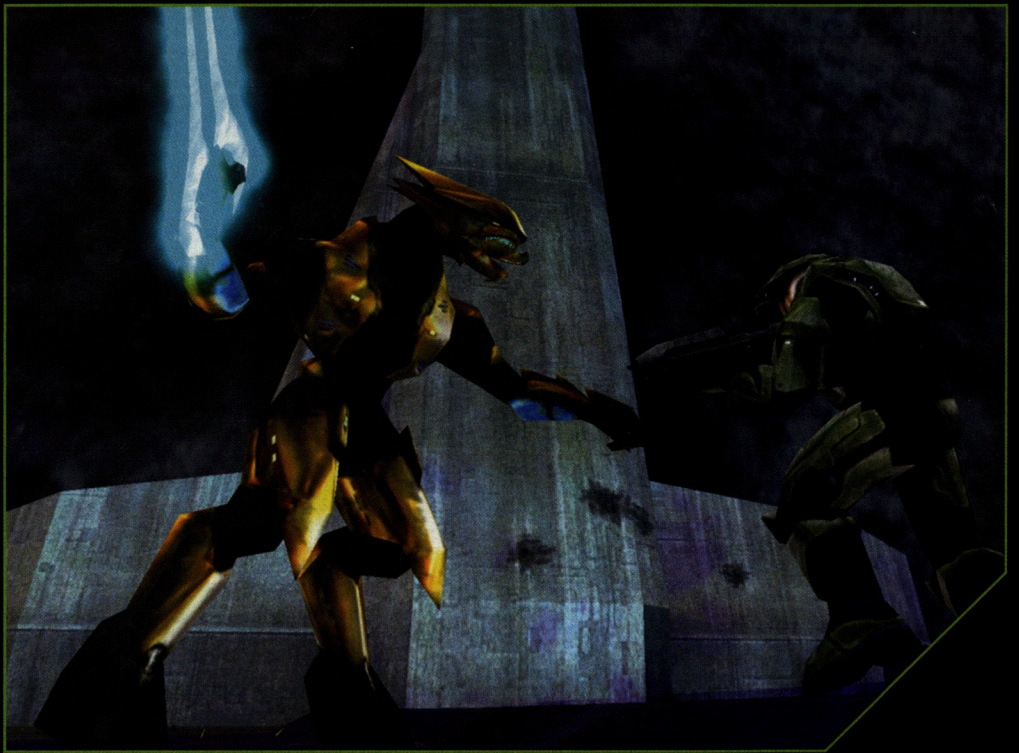


THIS BIT LOOKS BORING Strategic elements are kept fairly basic.

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

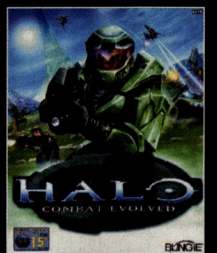
ISS 2 is the first non PES footy game that we've genuinely enjoyed playing on PS2. But we're still not sure if it's different enough to warrant purchase if you already own PES. However, it's looking like a worthy arcade alternative.



No pressure, but the mother of all combat games has arrived. Halo takes you to an alien ring world where you must destroy mankind's sworn enemy: The Covenant. Vanquish the alien hordes with a vast arsenal of weapons and vehicles, whilst laughing in the face of the Geneva Convention. Any wonder Edge magazine gave it 10/10. Just prepare your armoured underwear.

www.xbox.com/uk/halo

PLAY MORE. PLAY HALO.



"IT'S LIKE TOCA ON STEROIDS WITH SPONGY BRAKES"



ETA
APRIL
2002

SUPER TRUCKS

WE'VE ACTUALLY GOT THIS, IN THE OFFICE, NOW, BEFORE EVERYONE!

TYPE JESTER INTERACTIVE

PUBLISHER DRIVING

GAME GLANCE

- / 14 officially licensed teams
- / No irritating speed limiters on the trucks
- / Seven real life circuits plus secret bonuses
- / Split-screen two player mode to trash your pal
- / Ten highly aggressive opponents on track

SEE IT ON DVD

- / Eight-wheeled madness
- / Unorthodox racing
- / Joyously untidy driving
- / Cynical road tactics

F1 GAMES SHOULD BE THE PERFECT

antidote to the dreary, sterilised real thing. It's a piece of gaming entertainment and that should equate to fun, especially when you've got more options than George Clooney. Tinker with the settings a bit and you should have a ready made time machine back to the days when the lead

swapped hands more times than a dog eared fiver. But it just doesn't work like that.

No matter how hard you try to bend them to your preferences, F1 games are authentically dull. Either you find yourself romping away from the field like a thoroughbred at the donkey derby in Littlehampton, or it's one mistake and race over. None of them seem to be able to find that happy

medium where slight mistakes only see you dropping back into the clutches of a hungry pack baying for your bumpers. And where victory isn't just about knowing the track more intimately than the Freeman's catalogue lingerie section.

BRAKE TO VICTORY

Winning a race should feel like a real achievement, where you pitted your steering finesse against an aggressive bunch of nudging nutters and came out smelling of sticky champagne rather than charred rubber. Where you out-braked yourself on that tricky turn three only to claw your way back through the jostling pack of metal scraping madness. Where in

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

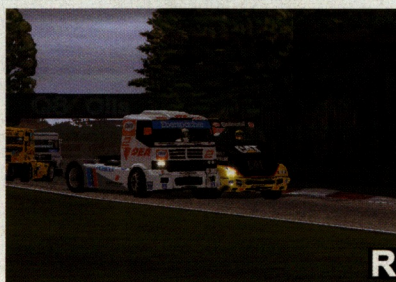
- ▲ It's just like TOCA with five-ton trucks
- ▲ Your competitors authentically drive like aggressive racing drivers

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ Only seven official tracks
- ▼ The drivers aren't exactly household names



CAB DRIVER Why are yellow vehicles always mental?



CAT FIGHT Two battling trucks makes a real mess.

LET'S SEE THAT BEAUTY AGAIN

ITV STYLE COVERAGE WITHOUT JIM ROSENTHAL'S SUN-BAKED MUG. RESULT.



THE REAL THING They're even more mental in real life.

GRAN TURISMO 3 HAS A MONOPOLY ON JAW dropping looks. We reckon only GT4 will be able to topple its visual splendour. But it's not just looks that make its replays so watchable. Painstaking camera placement was what made GT3's replays so enjoyable. Jester Interactive has realised how much fun it is to watch your exploits after the race, and spent some considerable effort making the replays an essential feature of this game. The expertise of a top ITV F1 cameraman has been employed and the actual camera placements from the Eurosport TV coverage have been used to make sure the replays capture every classic five-ton moment. And when races are as incident packed as every Super Truck event seems to be, this could be just as amusing as the racing itself.



THE PS2 THING Far less life threatening, just as much fun.



depth knowledge of every curve, bend and delicate bump is only valuable if you've got the late-braking nerve and gap-squeezing guts to go with it.

Even the mighty *Gran Turismo 3* failed to captivate with its five mindless drones sticking resolutely to the racing line totally oblivious of your frantic swerving and the realisation that they're the best mobile brake barriers ever conceived. Only the magnificent *TOCA Touring Cars* and its two superb sequels managed to get the balance right and truly understand what makes motor racing so thrilling and worth risking your no claims bonus for the buzz of the chequered flag.

Finally it looks like we've got a *TOCA* challenger on PS2 (at least until the fourth instalment is



TRACK CRAFT They corner surprisingly well for five ton beasts.

released, see page 58] in the most unlikely guise. Five-ton trucks are more commonly associated with clogging the motorway's slow lanes and giving Mini drivers a coronary as they force them to eek a few more miles per hour out of their smoking engine from two centimetres off their rear bumper. They don't quite conjure up a vision of blistering speed though, and when was the last time you saw someone try to cut up a mobile wrecking machine? Well, that's down to the fact that we don't come from the truck-racing hotbed of central Europe.

These mammoth race meetings regularly pull in a crowd twice as large as the British Grand Prix. Thanks to a clever display of mutual backscratching, the big companies provide the engines to the race teams, who then tinker with them to get maximum performance and report back their findings. In the most appealing bit of R&D since Hugh Hefner began auditioning models for playboy, unfeasibly large truck racing is made an entertaining reality.

THE EIGHT-WHEEL DEAL

Super Trucks crams every last spark plug of authenticity into the game with the inclusion of all the major teams and their thunderous engines along with all of the drivers from the official championship. Although this bunch of fearless

haulers will be about as familiar to us as a week without Geri Halliwell splashed across the newspapers. Still it's nice to know that the Michael Scumacher of the HGV world is in there somewhere.

There are five championships awaiting your big wheeled chicanery that get increasingly more difficult as you progress, as well as a number of bonus modes that appear in the goodies menu as a reward for your successes. Novelty games such as Last One Standing pit you against a full field of trucks with the tail ender eliminated each lap until only one victorious driver remains. They're a welcome addition to the more straightforward racing, and add a bit of variety to proceedings. However, the championships are where the real fun is to be had.

We've never driven a hulking great petrol powered monstrosity but we can imagine how it must feel to career one of these mobile giantors around a track designed for tiny, feather weight cars that are glued to the road. Either Jester



TIGHT CURVES Hold a tight line to stop any undertaking.



BUMPER CAM This view is just plain scary when you're this close.

Interactive has a similar imagination or more probably it's spent a fair amount of time soiling their pants in the passenger seat of one of these monsters because they feel just right. Acceleration takes that bit longer making you far more wary of losing any momentum with a silly braking makeover or overshooting a tight bend. But when you do get it cranked up, you feel pretty invincible. It's like being in charge of an out-of-control freight train, especially when you try to apply the brakes.

CAUSING A TRUCKUS

The single most significant difference between these colossal machines and the flimsy little Touring Cars, F1 racers and GT dream machines that appear in other games is that five-ton lorries do not want to stop. You'll see the bend in the distance and, taking the circumspect approach, apply the brakes with acres to spare. Better to be safe than embedded in a tyre wall. But nothing happens. Sweat begins to form on your brow and you apply them a bit harder. Visions of Hollywood brake-line cutting incidents flash across your mind and you apply them a bit harder still. Suddenly the tyre wall looms into view as the track starts to veer to the left and there's nothing for it but to stamp on the anchors with the venom of your first girlfriend when she crushed your heart into the pavement outside the Dog and Duck. And as happened then it all ends in tears – admittedly this time from the

steam pouring out of the radiator and the shattered glass – until you come to terms with having to brake unbelievably early for every bend.

We've got the motor racing officials to thank for outlawing anti-lock braking systems and anti-spin mechanisms in truck racing and for once they deserve a hearty pat on the back. The lack of braking efficiency adds immeasurably to the racing experience. With a pack of ten trucks ploughing into a corner in a gaggle of bending, scraping metal, the lack of grip causes complete carnage and endless entertainment. This is also due in no small part to the artistic licence employed by the developer that ignores the rule that restricts trucks to 160kph. With safety barriers not designed to withstand a marauding mass of steel truck, it's a genuine attempt to protect the lives of these truck



CONVOY Impacts smash lights, windscreens and bodywork.

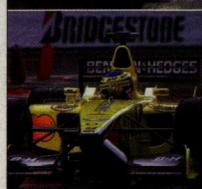
SUPER TRUCKS VS. RALLY VS. FORMULA 1

BIT TASTY BEHIND THE WHEEL? MAKE SURE YOUR CHOSEN MOTOR SPORT IS THE RIGHT ONE FOR YOU.



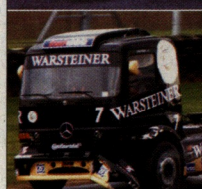
HOW FAST?

RALLY 300hp makes these machines a damn sight faster than your dad's Ford.
F1 850hp is an obscene amount of power for a light car. Delicate stomachs need not apply.
SUPER TRUCKS 1350hp make Super Trucks the Daddy. Any more and they could almost take off.



AM I SAFE?

RALLY It depends whether you're driving or spectating. You're probably better off in the car.
F1 Six deep tyre walls and grooved tyres just to make sure there's no possibility of overtaking.
SUPER TRUCKS Not really, but at least you'll get a good view of any carnage up ahead.



IS THE VEHICLE SAFE?

RALLY Reinforced roll cage and an amazing ability to withstand an almighty pounding.
F1 Bombproof carbon fibre safety cell for the driver that's sometimes the only piece left.
SUPER TRUCKS Crossed fingers and a gigantic furry dice to cushion your impact.



DO I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

RALLY Lightning fast reactions and an icy cool nerve are top of the list of requirements.
F1 Total personality bypass and an unwillingness to overtake are essential assets.
SUPER TRUCKS Strong bowel control and no fear of your own mortality. Beer belly optional.



IS IT FUN?

RALLY Skidding the car around every turn is a pre-requisite for success. That's a yes, then.
F1 Skidding? What's skidding? These drones follow a strict diet of follow the leader.
SUPER TRUCKS Yep, anti-lock brakes and traction control mechanisms are prohibited.



COMPETITIVE RACING THEN?

RALLY You only see your rivals when they're upside down in a ditch as you rocket past.
F1 Where you are on the grid is pretty much where you finish, unless Irvine stoves into you.
SUPER TRUCKS The truck you finish with will be considerably lighter than the one you began with.



MUST BE GOOD ON THE BRAKES?

RALLY It's not easy to stop on gravel and mud, but oak trees and stone walls help.
F1 Like having superglue on your tyres, this is why F1 drivers are strapped in so tightly.
SUPER TRUCKS Hit the brakes and you'll come to a stop somewhere on the next lap.



EASY TO CONTROL?

RALLY Power steering, sequential gearbox, the works. Put the back out, counter steer: job done.
F1 If you can withstand the G-forces that'll mould you a new face, it's no problem.
SUPER TRUCKS With Arnie's biceps you'll be fine. Just keep one hand spare for the CB radio.

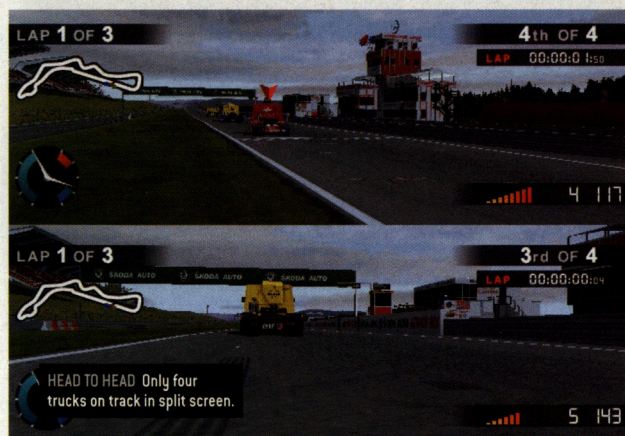


PIT STOP STRATEGIES?

RALLY A few body panels here, a windscreen there, maybe a quick engine re-build.
F1 Four new Michelins, a quick wipe of the visor and mind your toes.
SUPER TRUCKS Fill her up while I get a bacon buttie and a Magic Tree air freshener.



HOUNDING PACK A quick getaway is essential to avoid an early spin.



HEAD TO HEAD Only four trucks on track in split screen.



WHERE'S THE DICE? The M1 is never this clear.



WIDE LOAD The back end likes to fishtail a lot in corners.

drivers. But in the case of a game, speed always comes first.

Of course coupled with all this mayhem is a considerable sprinkling of debris. Whereas other games let insignificant bits fly off their vehicles and then mysteriously disappear when you come round on the next lap, every bit of twisted metal in *Super Trucks* remains on the track. Not only that but they're also solid objects that become lethal projectiles when flicked up by trucks in front of you. An errant bumper can put paid to your championship aspirations just as abruptly as an unscheduled trip into a sand trap, when it comes flying through your windscreen.

Understandably all this talk of big rig obliteration will have *Destruction Derby* fans rubbing their hands with glee. Unfortunately for this destructive crowd, needless demolition is punished in a novel and very welcome fashion. Rather than haul you in

/ CRASHING NEVER FEELS UNFAIR; IT'S JUST ANOTHER ELEMENT OF COMPETITIVE RACING /

for a race-destroying penalty pit stop, *Super Trucks* warns of any errant behaviour before black-flagging repeat offenders. This results in a ten second period where your truck's top speed is limited to a crawl. It's mildly frustrating without ruining your previous efforts, and after all those nudges, barges and needless ramblings, you have to admit that you had it coming.

THE DIRTY TRUCK

There are times in the game when you can't help but give in to your sadistic tendencies and force your opponents into the barriers because they're a mercilessly aggressive bunch. They'll think nothing of squeezing you into the wall or blatantly cutting you up and as a consequence they get penalised just as often as yourself. Their most devious tactic is to clip the back of your rig sending you spinning off at right angles to the track while the pack disappears into the distance. The best thing is that it never feels unfair; it's just another element that draws you in to the thrill of real competitive racing.

And that's the real secret to this game's appeal. The track never feels like a lonely place. Battling it

out with your competitors and endeavouring to overtake without hurtling into an earth-shaking collision is just as integral to *Super Trucks* as knowing your braking points and the nuances of the tracks. If you want a 'driving' game then *Gran Turismo 3* remains centuries ahead of the competition but if you want a 'racing' game *Super Trucks* looks like being the first great racer on PS2.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

We have to admit, we were very surprised with this one. Huge trucks are sluggish beasts that don't exactly scream swift thrills, but these eight-wheeled monsters are an entirely different proposition. In single or multi-player *Super Trucks* is the most competitively enjoyable driving experience we've had for some time. If the developer remains true to its word and includes a selection of bonus tracks to add to the miserly seven official courses, this could easily keep us amused until *TOCA Race Driver* is finally released.

"NOW HERE'S A GAME TO GET YOUR TEETH INTO..."



GLOVELY TO SEE YOU The models certainly look great.



INEVITABLE CAPTION TIME Oh kiss me, you brute.

MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

LOOK, IF MIKE TYSON WANTED YOU TO MAKE HIM A BOXING GAME, YOU'D SAY YES AS WELL.

TYPE | FIGHTING
PUBLISHER | CODEMASTERS

GAME GLANCE
/ 14 licensed boxers
/ Individual abilities
/ Real-time face damage
/ Loads to unlock
/ Create your own fighter
/ No biting, now

SEE IT ON DVD
/ Tyson smacking people
/ Tyson taunting people
/ Tyson flooring people
/ Audley Harrison

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE
▲ Mike Tyson's massively recognisable
▲ It's got plenty of depth for a boxing game

WORST BECAUSE
▼ Mike Tyson's a convicted rapist and all-round thug
▼ Will it remain accessible or suffer from usual faults?

PUNCHING SOMEBODY SO HARD

their brain folds over – the noble art. Mike Tyson isn't exactly one for advancing the nobility of it all either, having seemingly never heard of either the Queensbury Rules or the rights of women. Asked recently how he rated his latest challenger, Lennox Lewis, Tyson was rumoured to have stated he "tastes just like chicken" and produced a creamy carbonara sauce. This, of course, is absolutely not true, because it was us who started the rumour. Nevertheless, it wouldn't make him any more of an

enigma if it was true, and perhaps his increasingly unbalanced behaviour only makes him even more suitable for a video game.

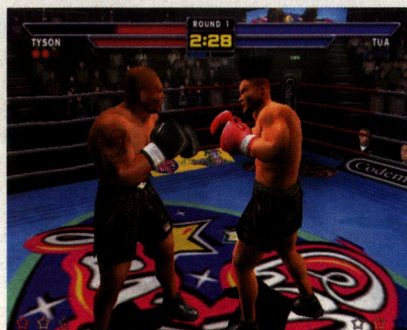
Of course, it's not just 'Iron' Mike Tyson (that's not 'iron' as in rhyming slang, is it?) in the game. Among the total of 14 heavyweights you'll find no lesser talents than Larry Holmes, Tim Witherspoon, Michael Grant, David Tua, Audley Harrison and Frans Botha. Each has his own signature punch in addition to the 36 generic attacks, including illegal moves – though not so illegal they take place at the press conference three months beforehand –

and a vast array of combos. In fact, once you tot them all up there are 512 regular combos to be found, so you should find something to do the damage among all that. Still not enough? Every boxer has four signature combos, and access to all of them will only come once you've reached the required skill level. Thankfully, Codemasters hasn't integrated any of Tyson's rather dubious cannibalistic manoeuvres.

PRIZEFIGHTER THIGHBITER

It's tough to pull these special moves off anyway, as you'll need to light the combo icons first. This is achieved by executing certain manoeuvres, such as ducks, blocks, sways, taunts and big hits, meaning you'll need to play with some finesse if you're to succeed. Mercifully, it seems that hammering the same button over and over won't be the easiest way to win. Timing will be important, too, as major punches will be powered up as you hold down the button. It's never that simple, of course, and holding it for too long sees the power fade away – and if that wasn't bad enough, the whole process leaves you vulnerable to attack.

For this eventuality you have quite a range of defensive manoeuvres, including deflecting head blocks to the right. This level of control should

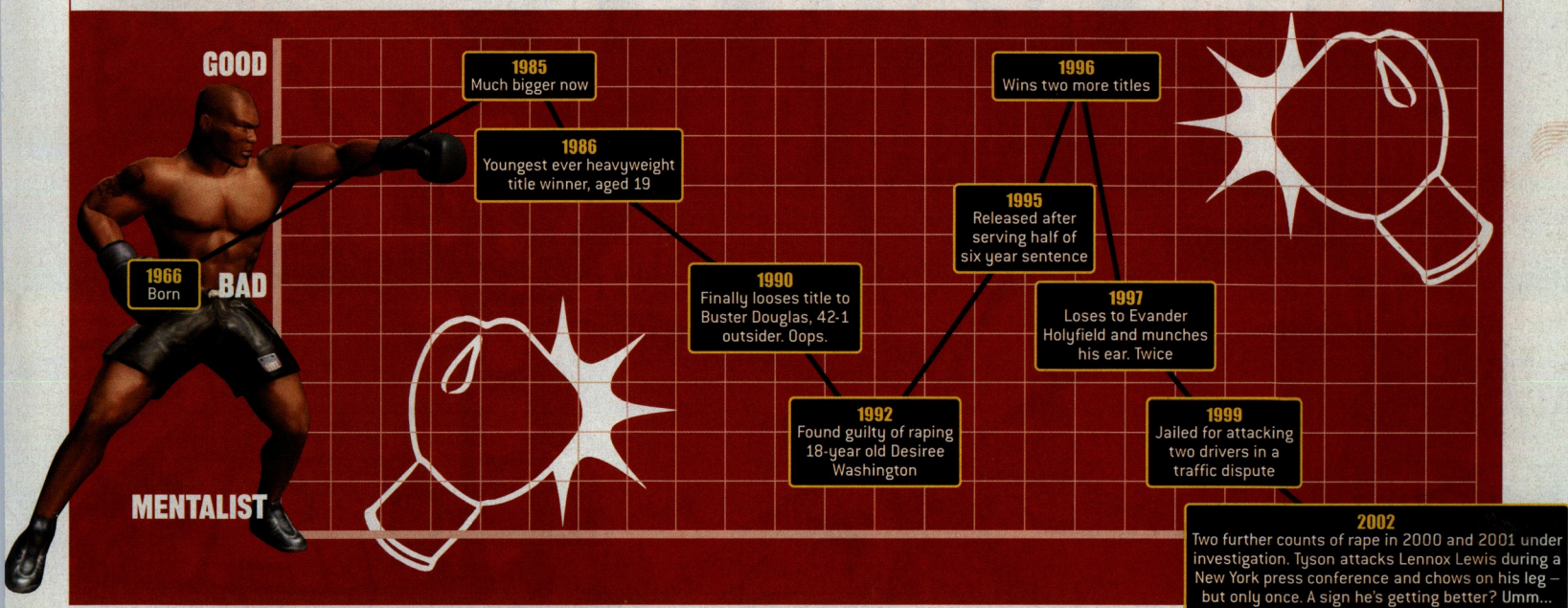


HOUSE PARTY You'd have to be a boxer to have a haircut like that.



CLOVEN Oh God! They've got hooves! It's the work of the devil!

T-WRECKS TYSON'S CAREER PATH – DODGY. SO WHERE DOES HE GO FROM HERE? LET'S LOOK AT IT SCIENTIFICALLY.



PLASTIC FANTASTIC Another cheap shot to impress the teenagers. Hold on, they're enormous! Woww!

certainly keep the enthusiasts happy, but if you're interested less in tactics and more on simply remaining standing, there are always the familiar two-fisted blocks for your head and body.

HEAVYWEIGHT PRIZEBITER

Intriguingly, even getting knocked flat on your arse needs some input. The 'Get Up Game' allows you to rebuild your poor mangled fighter as he regains his feet, restoring some of his all-important energy. Simply match the icons as fast and as accurately as you can, and he'll fairly zip to his feet and ask for more. He won't look any better for it, however, as there's no going back on the fully modelled damage. The game does promise 'real time facial animation' however, so they might at least look faintly revitalised by the lie down. Watch for the clouds of concern sweeping across their face as the realisation of where they are comes gusting back. Just so long as Mr Tyson doesn't start eyeing people's legs hungrily, we don't mind.

But what, apart from the noble brain-damaging violence of it all, is your motivation? Cash. Obviously. There's a handsome purse available (they're fighting over a purse now? Do these people have no shame?), and it's only enhanced by entertaining the crowds with your clownish



BOOGIE NIGHTS You can almost feel the bassline.

fighting and winning against the odds. There's no shortage of purses, belts and other items of ladies apparel to win either, with Bronze, Silver and Gold Belts vying for your time alongside Tyson's Challenge (presumably not to go to jail again), Undisputed Champ (defeat 15 boxers in a row) and Speed Boxing, where you must simply drop your opponent as quickly as possible. May we recommend windmilling your arms around violently and sticking your feet out in front of you? It always seems to be the preferred method at closing time.

Naturally there's a custom fighter mode too, and even these guys have plenty of stuff to unlock. New shorts and boots, tattoos, entrance music and those all-important taunts can be accessed through the Speed Boxing mode, and signature moves and combos can be bought with all the cash you're raking in. Sadly, the character design process doesn't quite stretch as far as the broken-skinned, pants-on-head madness of many wrestling games, but then, there's always your

private life for that. And anyway, it would be unlikely to impress the card girl – perhaps the most unbalanced, scantily clad woman so far in a video game – who's apparently there to increase the 'ambience'. Slightly less questionable efforts in this area encompass real-life arenas, context-sensitive crowd noises, introductions by the compere and commentary by real-world fight-vocalisers Bobby Czyz and Ian Darke. World famous, those two. So what's the final result going to be like? If you fancy a sneak preview of how the game's getting on, just have a peek at our DVD and check it out.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

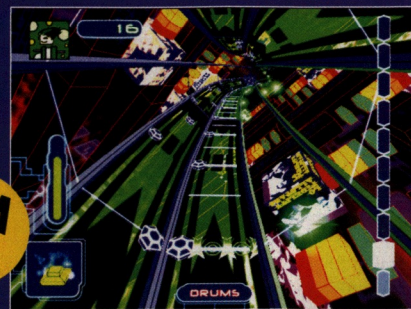
PSW

It's certainly got a strong licence, but with Tyson facing fresh rape charges and rumours of failing mental health as we write, it might be wise for Codemasters to include a ring set in a prison gym. On the psychiatric wing.

"THERE REALLY IS A GAME IN THIS ONE"



ETA
APRIL
2002



GREEN WITH BLUE Can you tell the difference between these?



BLUE WITH GREEN Sideways to scratch Roni Size. Sort of.



PURPLE, BLUE AND GREEN Drive faster, make synth noises!

FREQUENCY FACT The human hearing range is 20Hz to 20KHz.

FREQUENCY

APPROXIMATELY ONCE PER QUARTER, A GAME ARRIVES THAT CHALLENGES THE LINE BETWEEN ENTERTAINMENT AND ART.

TYPE	RHYTHM ENTERTAINMENT
PUBLISHER	SONY
GAME GLANCE	/ 25 tracks from real artists / Mesmeric visuals / Remix famous tunes / Four-player split screen competition mode

ADMITTEDLY REZ LOOKED GOOD,

but was it really a game or merely an experience? Was it worth £40 or could you get the same satisfaction out of a trippy screensaver? *Rez* still divides the office with some loving it, some hating it and some wondering whether it should be classed as a game at all. What we need is something that looks as mind twistingly chilled but with equally enthralling gameplay. Could *Frequency* be the answer?

It melds *Parappa the Rapper* style gameplay, with a fantastical concoction of psychedelic colours, bizarre shapes and the best soundtrack ever to feature in a game. Yes, the best collection of tunes on PS2 bar none. *Wipeout*, *MTV Music generator* and *Extreme G-3* were merely hors d'oeuvres to this eclectic mix of vibrating aural pleasure.

Frequency features 25 mixes by licenced artists (see the Played In Full panel for the full list) and they're not just architects of the usual, predictable house sounds. Trance, breakbeat, hip-hop, drum 'n' bass,

even thrash and pop span a pretty wide spectrum of pulsating tunes. And one of the elements that draws you into this game and entices you to keep playing is the desire to unlock all of the tunes because the majority are well worth the effort.

WHAT'S THE BASSIS?

So how does it all work? Every level, test, challenge or whatever you wish to call it, features a single tune and a mesmerising octagonal tunnel. Each of the eight tunnel walls represents a particular track – bassline, drum section, vocals etc – from the chosen song. Only one wall can be selected at a

time and the rhythm of that particular track is depicted by three identical symbols that appear either on the left, right or middle of the wall.

Corresponding to three buttons on the joypad these symbols need to be matched by your musically timed button presses.

The tunnel is split into ten sections, which are then further divided into smaller portions, similar to that of musical bars. Keep in time with the

music for a couple of bars and that track will continue to play automatically for the rest of the section so that you can now move on to another track. The aim is to get all of the tracks playing before the end of each section.

Alluding to its gaming foundations, there's a power bar that depletes every time you make a mistake, and power-ups that multiply your score or automatically play the track till the end of that section, if you're skilful enough to activate them. But if you only view the game in terms of scores and progression you'll be missing out on what makes this such a rewarding experience. Pressing buttons in time to the music and in co-ordination with three symbols is only part of the challenge.

Depending on which tracks you concentrate on, songs can be totally altered, almost into a completely fresh experience. Without the thumping bassline or monotonous drum section, tunes can be transformed into ambient, melodic pieces or mental guitar solos. It's very difficult to get all channels playing at once so what you mostly hear is only certain portions of the tune layered on top of each other. Sometimes it sounds a bit empty when you haven't got many tracks up and running

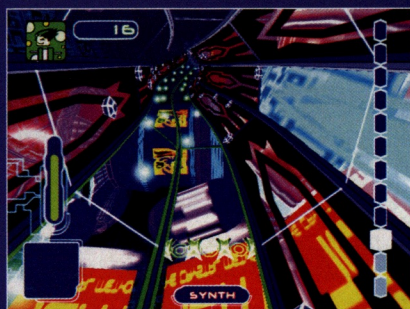
PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ Incredibly simple *Parappa*-esque controls
- ▲ The best game soundtrack ever recorded

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ The music ending at each section is anti-climactic
- ▼ Expert mode can be bloody hard



MEMORABLE MOMENT This is possibly the best bit of the game.



MEMORABLE MOMENT This is possibly the worst bit of the game.



BLUE NOTE Down the tunnel of bass we go!



A CYMBAL WAY OF LIFE Through the ring of upper-mids we go!



IN THE GUTTERS See where Fatboy Slim gets his shirt designs.

but there are also times when it transmogrifies into something better than the real thing. Each time you play there're many aural possibilities.

TREBLE THE FUN

Of course the basic goal is to progress through each song unlocking others along the way. It's a simple premise but hugely enticing because the penultimate five tracks can only be unlocked in normal mode and not the far less testing easy mode. While the final five tracks can only be accessed in the incredibly difficult expert mode, which will taunt your eyes, contort your fingers and bewilder your ears.



THE TRACKS BRING ME TEARS Play to unlock the secret Daphne & Celeste bonus game.

Success also opens up a wider variety of arenas to journey through and lose your mind within. *Frequency*'s visuals veer from outlandish *Tron*-like wire frame models and shapes, to garish futuristic symbols and flashing video walls straight out of a U2 concert. Hurtling down a twisting tunnel with pulsating icons and throbbing designs rotating in the background is a mesmeric experience. It's like travelling along a seethrough tube tunnel above Piccadilly Circus circa 2050 with the driver's tannoy system pumping out seat-shaking tunes.

Unfortunately *Frequency* suffers like nearly every other rhythmic experience in that it's best witnessed from the spectator's position. It's not nearly as bad as *Parappa*, where your eyes spend the whole time glued to the tiny icons rather than the fantastic visuals, but you still tend to focus a little too intently on the icons with the warped backgrounds entrancing only your periphery.

/ MIKE FOLEY

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

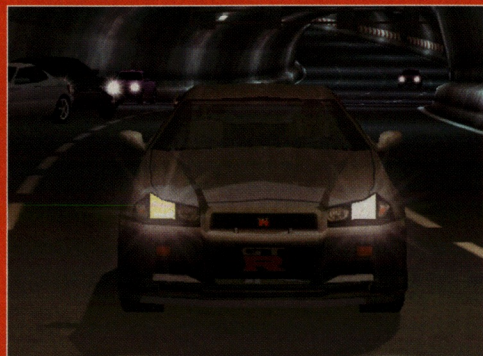
Frequency possesses that unique ability to suck you into a beguilingly hypnotic rhythmic experience and release you hours later to the obliviousness of everything that has gone on around you. Part of this appeal lies in it being more forgiving than other rhythmic games with mistimed hamfistedness punished far less severely, enabling you to luxuriate in the musical splendour of your very own tinkering and the perpetual urge to nail every single obscure audio challenge the game throws up.

PLAYED IN FULL

WHO NEEDS THE MINISTRY WITH A LINE UP LIKE THIS?

THE CRYSTAL METHOD / AKROBATIK / NO DOUBT
ORBIT / FREEZEPop / DUB PISTOLS
LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS / FEAR FACTORY / PAUL
OAKENFOLD / ETHAN EVES / POWERMAN 5000
ORBITAL / DJ QBERT / BT / CURVE / JUNGLE
BROTHERS / FUNKSTAR DE LUXE / RONI SIZE
AND REPRAZENT / MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO
JUNO REACTOR / TONY TRIPPI / DJ HMX
SYMBION PROJECT / KOMPUTER KONTROLLER



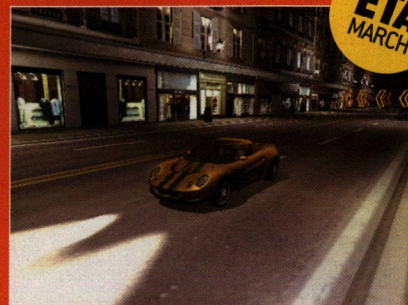


"MIND IF I TAKE IT FOR A QUICK SPIN?"

ETA
MARCH



FIRE AT WILL. There's no way to drive this thing sensibly.



ROCKET LOTUS The ever-popular Elise is as sharp as it gets.



FASCINATING Blue Peter helped erect that blue sundial years ago.

TEST DRIVE

THE VENERABLE TEST DRIVE SERIES AIMS TO WIPE CLEAN ITS TARNISHED IMAGE WITH THIS PRETTY-LOOKING INSTALMENT.

TYPE	DRIVING
PUBLISHER	INFOGRAMES
GAME GLANCE	
/ Over 20 cars / Four real-life cities / Scripted arcade fun	



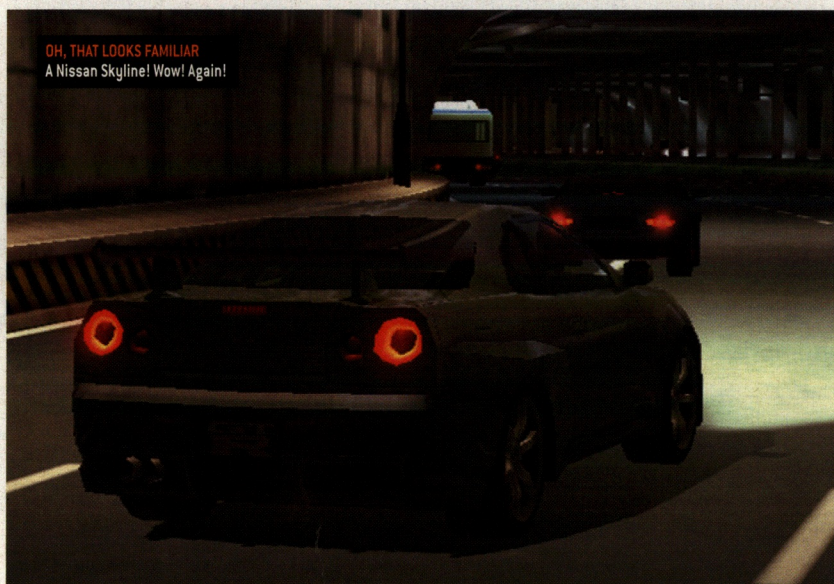
AS BEAUTIFUL AS IT LOOKS, AS astonishingly accomplished as its physics are, as amazingly detailed almost every aspect of it is: aren't you just a teensy bit bored with *Gran Turismo 3*?

We can't deny it's got the sleekest, most highly tuned physique out there, but perhaps because of that it never wants to fight. Instead of a pack of cars seeking to extinguish your lead and life through every corner, it throws its hands up

screaming: "not my face!" as soon as you're fast enough in a straight line. It's unquestionably the 'Real Driving Simulator', but when it comes to racing, *GT3* tanks it into the gravel trap in a cloud of shame. So, in spite of how it may first appear when faced with such an accomplished driving game, at least there's a gap in the market. And it's through this gap that *Test Drive* is seeking to invade.

COLD START

To be fair, this series didn't exactly cover itself in glory on PSone, but it's out to change all that now. After all manner of vague twists and themes – including a lame off-road version – this offers good old arcade-style racing in stupidly powerful cars.



OH, THAT LOOKS FAMILIAR
A Nissan Skyline! Wow! Again!

PSW PROPHECY
BEST BECAUSE
▲ Simple, but joyously over-the-top racing ▲ Amusing American muscle cars look fun to tear apart
WORST BECAUSE
▼ The <i>Test Drive</i> name doesn't bode well ▼ The handling must be spot on to compete with rivals



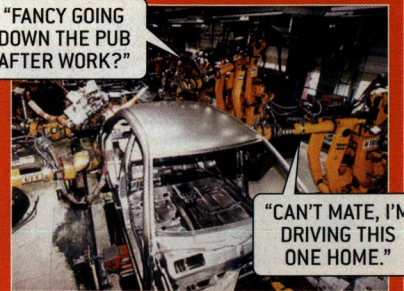
DODGY BLUR American muscle cars and high speeds. Fatal.



GERMAN ROBOT SHAMES UK DRIVERS

ANOTHER USELESS INVENTION THAT'LL TURN UP ON AN IRONIC REVIEW OF TOMMOROW'S WORLD

"FANCY GOING DOWN THE PUB AFTER WORK?"



"CAN'T MATE, I'M DRIVING THIS ONE HOME."

HAD A PROBLEM PASSING YOUR DRIVING TEST FOR real? Oh dear. In that case, a headless metal robot called Klaus is better than you. Klaus is strictly a VW man, on account of being built by them, though secretly he wants a Porsche like all the rest of us. He went for his maiden run in March 2000 with none of the Maureen-style problems associated with being a real person. He did, however, have three legs and three arms: could this be the answer to 95 percent of humanity's ineptitude behind the wheel? Could the 'drivers' of Nissan Micras be fitted with extra appendages to get out of second gear? Or is a program of aggressive culling still the only way?



SHELBY FINE The Cobra is sweet, sweet lunacy.



TOO QUIET We're hoping the promised traffic is here somewhere...



TUNNEL OF SHOVE We want to crash it more than drive it. True.



CURB MAULER It's possible to roll the cars – quite easy, in fact.

The game is based around the illegal road-racing scene, and populated by the kind of drivers you may or may not (if you were wise) have seen in *The Fast And The Furious*. And maybe doing handbrake turns in an Escort on a seafront somewhere. At least this means the opponent AI should be as realistic as necessary, as your PS2 is easily powerful enough to replicate the behaviour of an idiot driver.

You, however, are not an idiot. You're Dennis Black, an ex-racing driver who's turned to the darkside of illegal street-racing clubs to earn his money. Brought in by Donald Clark, a racer who's been injured and needs a stand-in, your ultimate aim is to best Vasily Raskolnikov, the fastest racer on the street. But all is not as it seems, and Donald Clark may not be telling you quite everything. It's your job to drive really, really fast and prove... something or other. Look, just shut up and drive.

Whole sections of cities have been faithfully reproduced, although if we're honest the locations are a little uninspiring – San Francisco, London, Monaco and Tokyo. What's more promising is the way that large sections of each city have been modelled, complete with traffic. Even better, despite the inclusion of roughly a dozen courses per city, they aren't marked out by weird glowing barriers, meaning you're never limited to where you can go. Developer Pitbull Syndicate wanted to keep

the flow of traffic going for all the race types, and this would be impossible without using the strange, permeable-to-traffic-but-not-to-you barricades of *Burnout*, which clearly didn't appeal. Thus the races are governed by checkpoints, and your navigation comes courtesy of the heads-up display. You can go wherever you like, within reason – once the timer runs down it's game over. This means the natives will be a problem as much in the circuit challenges as in the point-to-point races, which should hopefully add a welcome level of unpredictability to the gameplay.

NO OFFICER, I STOLE IT

Seeing as your racing activities are strictly outside the law, the police are there to complicate matters. Well, they are there most of the time – some of the challenges would be spoiled by their presence, so they've been paid off for these. On others it becomes an exercise in evasion, almost *Driver*-esque, and it sounds promising. Progressing through the game also sees you fighting 'boss' characters, where you can acquire the most desirable cars.

And it's quite a selection of vehicles. There are just over 20, and despite the inclusion of the impressive but inevitable Imprezas, Skylines and Celicas (is this a legal requirement now?) there are some real must-haves. Big American cars are

always funny, and several Corvettes, a Camaro, the Pontiac GTO, two versions of the Dodge Viper, the same company's Charger (as seen in *Bullit*), the Plymouth Cuda and Ford's GT350 and GT40 should be nothing less than hysterical if all goes well.

Sadly there's no damage to keep you entertained when all that excess power gets out of control, but it is possible to roll the cars into some pretty spectacular accidents. Handy roadside objects that act as ramps should help you out there. There's a two player mode – although no four player, sadly – and the promise of extra motors for it once you've unlocked them in Story mode. So, although the story aspect is relatively new (but something that's appearing soon in several games, most notably the next *TOCA* and *McRae* titles), the recipe for the rest is pretty familiar. Over familiar? Time will tell. But there aren't a lot of decent arcade drivers around at the moment.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

Test Drive certainly looks impressive, even if the choice of locations is rather stale. The car selection is far more interesting, however, and the addition of an illegal street racing storyline should give us further reason to unlock all those cars. Could be a surprise hit.

PREVIEW UPDATE

WE'VE PREVIEWED THEM ALREADY, BUT THEY'RE STILL NOT FINISHED. HERE'S A QUICK UPDATE...



IT'S THE ROZZERS! The police, the cops, the bizzies, the pigs, the babylon...



A JEEP GAG Driving on one wheel requires the very finest stunt skills.



TUX THE TOP PRIZE A selection of the world's very best stunt cars is included.

POP QUIZ A classic scene, but from which movie?



STUNTMAN

DEVELOPMENT HAS SHIFTED INTO TOP GEAR ON THIS RAMP-RIDDEN ROLLERCOASTER FROM THE MAKERS OF THE PSONE CLASSIC DRIVER.

ROUNDLY CRITICISED FOR ASKING A BIT TOO MUCH OF THE ageing PSone when it made *Driver 2*, with its poor viewing distances and scenery popping up out of nowhere, developer Reflections is determined that no such objections are raised when *Stuntman* arrives. It's the sort of game that, when spied for the first time, incites punters to need a PS2 just to play it. And from what we've seen so far, when these spontaneous shoppers get home and plug in their new purchases, they won't be disappointed either.

Even after playing *Burnout*, *GT3* and *GTA3* to death, we reckon *Driver's* handling is still top of the tree for pure exhilarating fun. Nothing comes close to the doughnut pulling, hubcap flinging, fender bending joy of that game. Well, not until *Stuntman* is finished. We've played it and believe us, it takes tyre squealing motor mayhem to all new levels of sublime handling delight. And what could be more fun than recreating all the best stunts from all the best action movies of all time? Exactly. Nothing.

■ TYPE: Driving ■ PUBLISHER: Infogrames
■ LAST PREVIEW: PSW#21 ■ ETA: June

FINAL FANTASY X

HOW DIFFICULT CAN IT BE TO GET A FEW MORE TRANSLATORS ON THE CASE?

THE JAPANESE HAVE BEEN PLAYING IT FOR NEARLY A year, but there's still no definite release date for the tenth *Final Fantasy* epic over here. Even the Americans have been enjoying this remarkable looking game since Christmas. But Europeans remain second class gaming citizens located somewhere off the northern coast of Africa. A special edition has just been released in Japan

with fully English dialogue, so why isn't it out over here yet? We've also discovered to our utter dismay that the European version won't even be optimised. You know those huge black borders that blighted *Onimusha* and *Devil May Cry* and the inferior speed of both those games? Well here we go again with the same scenario. *Final Fantasy X* will be 12.5 percent slower and look like a shrunken widescreen presentation.

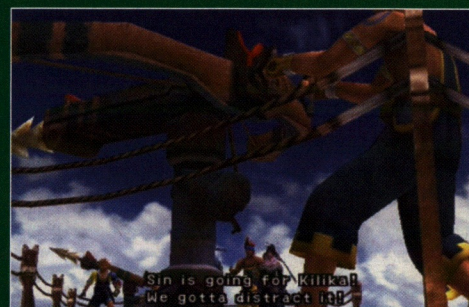
It's not all gloomy and depressing though. At least we've been able to get our hands on the special edition. Slap this month's PSW DVD into your PS2 to witness some brand new footage of the English speaking game and maybe release some of the pent up frustration you must surely be feeling after this interminably long wait. See, it is coming, it's just taking a while.

Maybe we can perk up your day a little further with the news that *FFX* is still going to be well worth the wait. Playing it all again without the need for a Japanese /English dictionary by our side was even more enjoyable this time around. *Final Fantasy* developer Square remains the masters of the RPG, and with so little to keep intrepid adventurers occupied on PS2, *FFX* is still looking like an essential purchase.

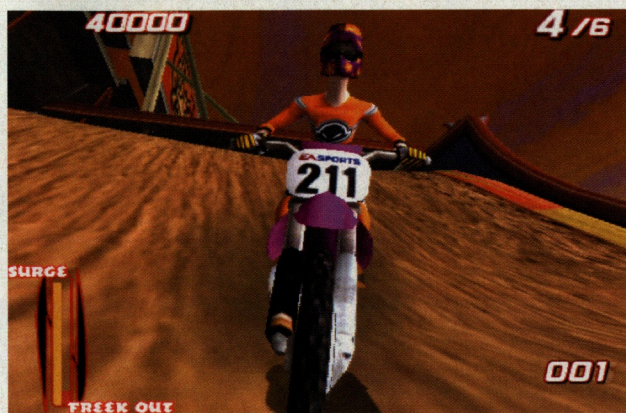
■ TYPE: Adventure ■ PUBLISHER: Sony
■ LAST PREVIEW: PSW#21 ■ ETA: June



WE HAVE PLAYSTATION 3! In Japan, they're all laughing at us.



THE WAVE FORWARD Colours, spheres, magic. It's familiar territory.



NECKS TIME I'LL STICK TO THE M1 Leaping around on these bikes can lead to an odd body shape.

FREEKSTYLE

WE DON'T REMEMBER KICKSTART BEING THIS MUCH FUN.

FOR YEARS, PSW'S MOTORSPORT MAN STEVE WILLIAMS HAS LAMENTED THE incomprehensible popularity of F1 while his beloved motorbikes are left to languish on Channel 5 at some ungodly hour. He's got a point. While F1 is one of the best alternatives to sleeping pills, bike racing features some of the biggest lunatics in motor racing. Men like Valentino Rossi put their lives on the line every week in the name of entertainment, and they do it with style and the personality of ten Robbie Williamses. But even these guys can't compare with the fearless petrol heads who inhabit the world of off-road biking.

Freestyle pays homage to these dirty, two-wheeled nutters with what can be thought of as *SSX* on mud. With the usual psychedelic taste in colours, *Freestyle* is a visual mélange of crimson skies, neon pyrotechnics, dirt caked bikes and pasty flesh contorted into unimaginable forms, all in the name of stunting amusement. And the real secret to all of this madness is the fact that apart from having real riders feature in the game, everything else has been created from pure imaginative craziness. Without any licensing constraints the developer has been given the freedom to design the wildest, most invigorating tracks imaginable purely from the point of view of gaming satisfaction.

■ TYPE: Extreme Sports ■ PUBLISHER: EA Sports Big
■ LAST PREVIEW: PSW#26 ■ ETA: April



SUNDAY DRIVERS These screens don't highlight PSW's ruthlessly aggressive trick style!



STARRING: NOBODY Dan Spanglebanner not included. That's actually a good thing. It's all made up.



DEUS EX

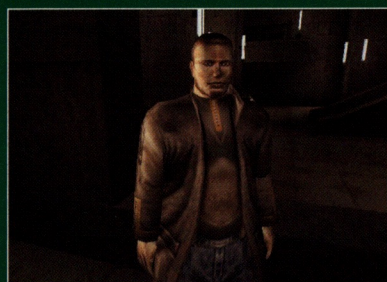
WHAT'S GOING ON? ANOTHER MONTH, ANOTHER NO SHOW.

WE COULD ALMOST TASTE THE POISONED DARTS and smell the chloroform. The man from DHL was waiting outside the Ion Storm offices with keys in the ignition. The plane was refuelled and ready for takeoff. And we were fidgeting in our seats, eagerly poised to take delivery of "the package." Then at the 11th hour, with the point of no return in sight and the last chance saloon emptying its tables for the night, the phone rang. The bearer of bad news pleaded for leniency and what could we do? These things happen. Games can slip for an infinite number of reasons. At least in this case we were safe in the knowledge that *Deus Ex*'s svengali, Warren Spector, is a consummate perfectionist.

If *Deus Ex* has been held back for some last minute finishing touches it can only be for a good reason. From what we've seen already this game has class written all over it. If it means waiting one more month for a last few worthwhile additions to this potential classic then we'll grudgingly concede.

In the meantime all we could prise out of Eidos was the news that you're not tied to your role as an enforcer of the peace. Throughout the game you'll get to interact with the good, the bad and the mysterious and it's up to you to decide who to side with. Will you sympathise with the freedom fighters or bang 'em up without question? We'll definitely have the review next month, or toys will be strewn about the pram's wheels and the messenger will be shot.

■ TYPE: Shooting ■ PUBLISHER: Eidos
■ LAST PREVIEW: PSW#25 ■ ETA: April



I DON'T DO SMILING Meet gaming's moodiest man.

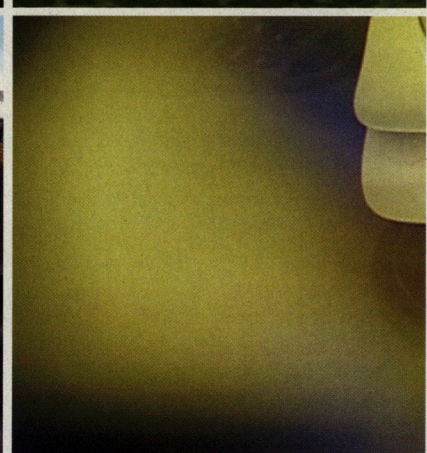
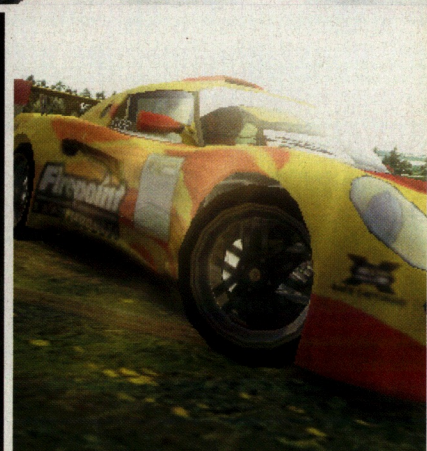


BRING ME SPECTOR... PSW gets angry as Deus Ex is delayed.

TOCA
RACE
DRIVER
crashing dad's car

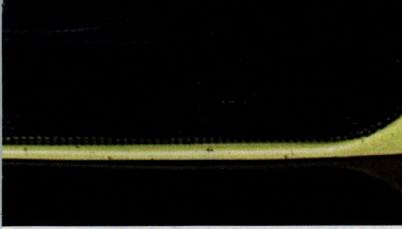
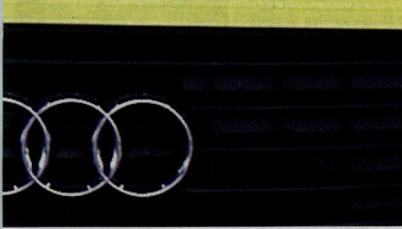
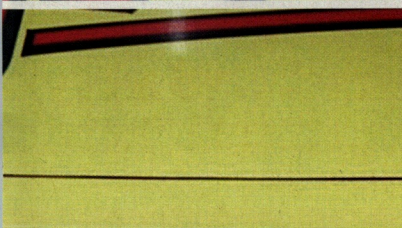
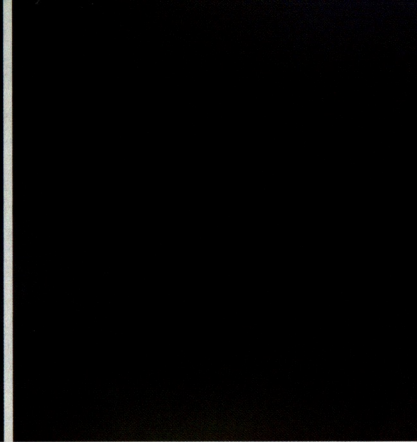
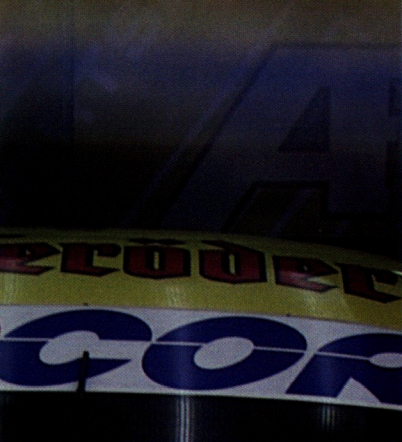


IMPREZ-IVE As if the WRC versions of this chariot weren't mad enough.



CALL IT A HUNCH We think they quite like tyre smoke.

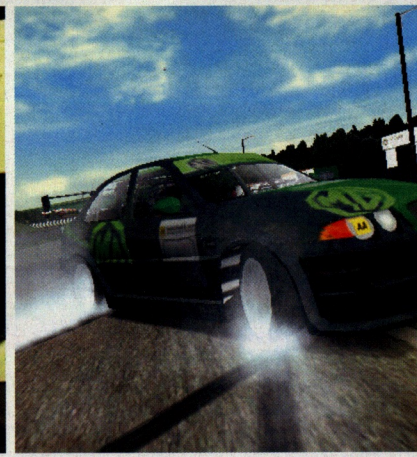




ABSOLUTE POWER

IT'S SAID THAT ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY, BUT NOBODY EVER POINTS OUT THAT BEING CORRUPT IS OFTEN GREAT FUN. AND THERE'S MORE HORSEPOWER LURKING WITHIN TOCA RACE DRIVER THAN YOU COULD EVER USE WITHOUT CAUSING SERIOUS DAMAGE... BUT CAN IT BE ENOUGH TO REACH POLE POSITION IN THIS MOST INTENSELY FOUGHT OF ARENAS?

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS



MERCEDES EASILY BENDS
CLK-GTRs – sexual healing.

1 MOVING ON

Codemasters feels the time has come for change. It's no longer just hardcore gamers out there, it says, and the PS2 crowd is becoming an ever more disparate group. Obviously, they want to cater for the inevitably more 'casual' gamers joining the ranks of the converted, as well as the console's racing *cognoscenti*. Fair enough. But we'd add that racing games are long overdue an overhaul anyway.

It's no longer enough to give us a bunch of cars, a few tracks and just let us loose – we've done that. Vastly shinier cars and further tracks with more impressive bushes aren't enough either – we've done that too. This year's headlamps and paint? For Christ's sake, we've done that! What we need now is a fresh approach, some reason to actually keep playing these games. *Toca Race Driver* has this very thing. Hallelujah. And the key words are in the title... *race driver*. *TRD* has a strong backbone of story, centring around your character, Ryan McKane, rather than just beginning and ending with an impersonal car. After all, motor racing isn't like that. F1 games are particularly irksome, says Codemasters, because you have characters like Schumacher – and we'd add Montoya and Irvine – that are never, ever transferred effectively to a game. And now they want to change all that. Enter Ryan McKane.

TOCA RACE DRIVER crashing dad's car



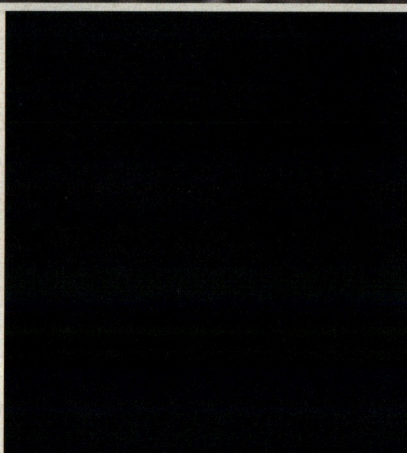
TAKE YOUR PICK Vehicle choice is wide – from road to full race.



2 MAN AND MACHINE

So what the developer had hit upon was a story arc, the vital human element, a fictional character you could inhabit. Very much like in the game's PSone predecessor, *World Touring Cars*, your character receives email offers from other teams around the world as his success increases, which already adds something beyond the win-championship-and-move-on ethic of most games. But the big difference this time is that you'll actually see these managers and interact with them. It's certainly far more involving to watch your character mingle in bustling pit lanes than merely reading about the other teams on a 2D screen.

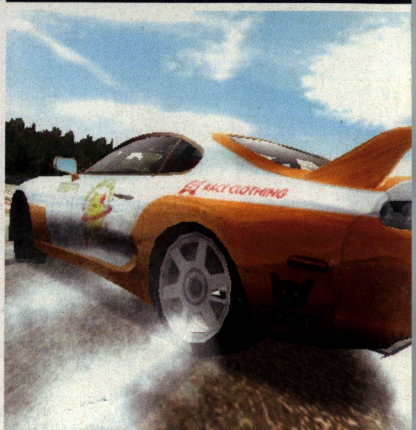
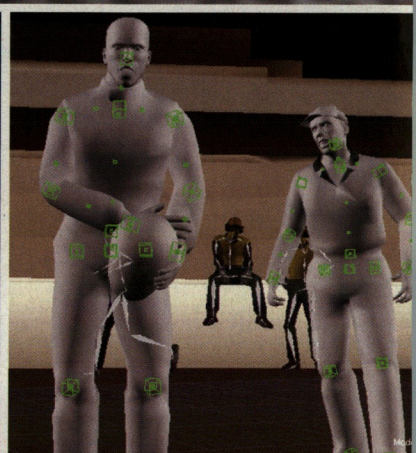
It's not just a few managers you'll be meeting, either – there are actually around 20 major characters in the game. Despite the regular appearance of two other clearly central characters (such as the striking Melanie Sanchez, daughter of Cuban Joe) on early promotional material, you'll only be able to play as Ryan. Why? The team wanted everyone in the world to have the same experience – it's important, it felt, that when you next wander over to the coffee machine at work that you can talk about the amazing things that have been happening. This couldn't happen if everybody was having different experiences: everybody sees the same episode of *EastEnders*, after all. It's a fair point... if it can make it work. And it will, so long as the events in question are amazing enough. But we're just going to have to wait and see.



3 GOING TO THE MOVIES

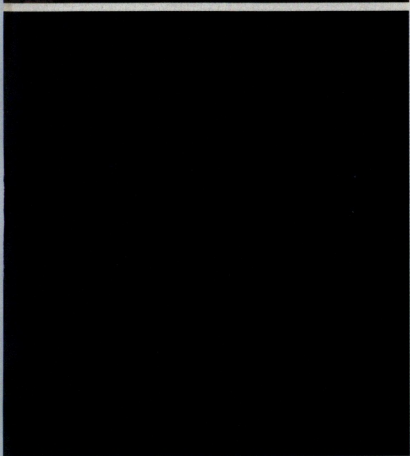
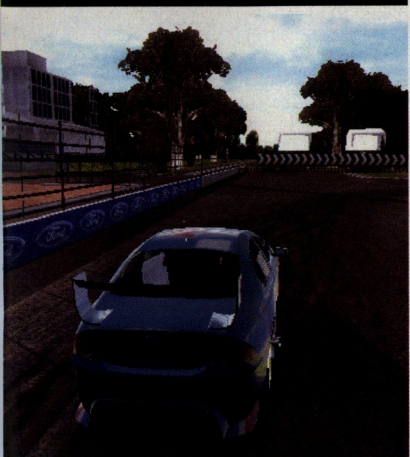
How much of a part do you play in this out-of-car experience? Is this true 'interaction' or just the meaningless, 'you can choose to press a button here but you can't choose not to' buzzword version? Well, you can't actually move Ryan around as you would Lara or Claire Redfield, but it's not full motion video either. FMV always looks odd, due to it being entirely pre-rendered (as in the *Toy Story* or *Shrek* movies) and far more detailed than anything could possibly be in the game. So, pretty though it is, FMV causes a jarring break in 'believability' – and just rubs it in that the playable part doesn't look as good. So in *TOCA Race Driver*, the same processes that produce the game are used to produce the cut-scenes.

This means you'll see your car in the background; you'll see the actual track you're at, and packs of 'real' cars screaming past on qualifying laps. Special filtering effects are also used throughout the game to give that much sought-after 'cinematic' feel. It's the flat, almost eerie light of the likes of *Pitch Black*, *Three Kings* and the Mexican scenes in *Traffic* that it's going for, and using cameras with accurate focal lengths only adds to the effect. One final thing: keeping control of Ryan out of your hands and in those of a director gives Codemasters one very important tool. Drama.

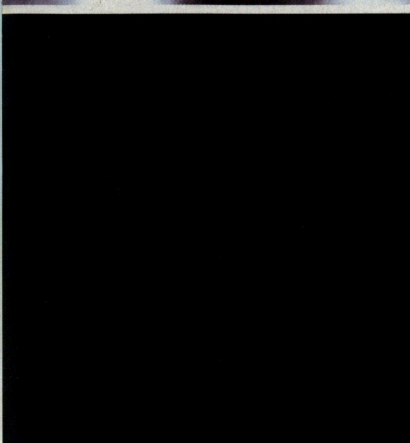




A1 TVR A psychopathically quick TVR in Austria. Yesterday.



MUST... CLIP... APEX The cars are more 'chuckable' than ever before.



4 CUT THE CUT-SCENES

Thankfully it's decided its new dramatic tool is more along the lines of a scalpel with which to make the fewest, most effective incisions in your psyche, rather than a shovel with which to beat you into submission. Each cut-scene lasts 30-40 seconds at the most – the last game in the series, the aforementioned *World Touring Cars*, took that long just to load a level – and there are only 18 scenes in the entire game. Hold that figure up alongside the 40+ hours of gameplay, and you can see you'll hardly be saturated with Codemasters' vision of racing life. This will be no *Top Gear Solid*, some horrible rambling nightmare of joypad inaction where concern for the rainforests clouds your choice of tyre compound and you ache to turn the tranquilliser gun on yourself. It's a rather more subtle experience, but all the more explosive for it – remember Mr Kojima, less is more! – akin to, say, *Half-Life* on wheels. But without aliens. Or the army. And with cars instead of guns. And... oh. It's not really working, is it? Damn.

So what are the key ingredients? Well, there's some massive needle between Ryan and his successful brother, for a start. There's The Big Thing that happened with their father, himself a famous driver in a past era. Some of his compadres from that time still inhabit the world's pit lanes, and Ryan will be walking into the garages of many of them: believe us, The Truth Is In There. Oh, and somewhere along the way there's a big crash. A big crash...

5 STEP IN TO MY OFFICE

It's impressive to see how far Codemasters has gone in its attempts to incite a new world order – the desire to create a truly immersing racing experience has even extended to the options screens. It didn't like the way most games (even its own past titles, it admits) remain reliant on flat menus – complete with car spinning pointlessly in space – and dull loading screens to join the bits between the 3D races. So instead of a series of static, immersion-breaking screens you see Ryan in his office. It's fully 3D, and the objects within it represent all the options you would expect of a racer. Naturally there must be a break with reality somewhere – in the end, this is still a game – but because everything you see is logical and functional there's a minimum of enforced separation from 'being' a racing driver. Highlight your computer, for instance, and you can view your email offers. The filing cabinet contains a file for each of the more mundane options, and each of them (even the adjustable sliders) appears in McKane's handwriting, just as it should. Choose the door and you'll find your 'free time' selection, such as non-championship races, available in the next room. All you need do is pick a set of keys from the key rack – browse each car's brochure if you want to – and go for a drive. Multiplayer take your fancy? The other drivers on the sofa are probably up for a bit of a thrash... it's certainly a more entertaining approach to setting up your game, and definitely helps maintain the aura.

IT'S LIKE HALF-LIFE ON WHEELS. BUT WITHOUT ALIENS. OR THE ARMY. AND WITH CARS INSTEAD OF GUNS. AND... IS THIS WORKING? _



SENSIBLE ROVER At least he'll be OK if he breaks down.

Just for the record

IF YOU'RE A REGULAR READER YOU'LL HAVE SEEN THESE ALREADY, BUT WE DON'T WANT ANYONE TO MISS OUT.



TRACKS

UK:

- Brands Hatch (Indy and GP)
- Donington Park
- Knockhill
- Oulton Park
- Rockingham Motor Speedway (short and oval)
- Silverstone

GERMANY:

- Hockenheimring (short and GP)
- Norising
- Nurburgring
- Oschersleben

AUSTRALIA:

- Adelaide
- Bathurst
- Canberra
- Eastern Creek Raceway
- Oran Park
- Phillip Island
- Sandown International

FRANCE:

- Dijon Prenois
- Magny Cours

AMERICAS:

- Bristol Speedway
- Charlotte
- Las Vegas
- Mexico City
- Sears Point
- Vancouver

Plus:

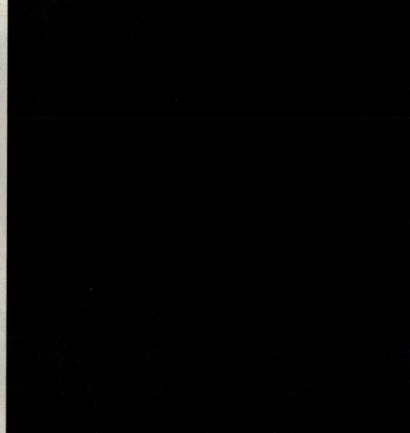
- A1 Ring in Austria
- Catalunya in Spain
- Fuji in Japan
- Mantorp Park in Sweden
- Monza and Vallelunga in Italy
- TI Circuit Aida in Japan
- Zandvoort in the Netherlands
- Zolder in Belgium

CARS

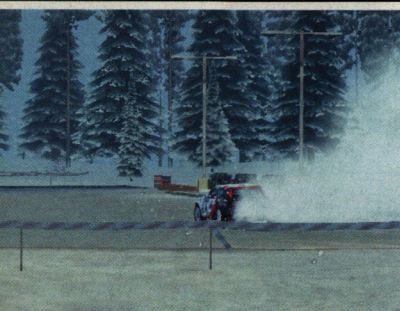
- Abt Audi TT-R
- Alfa Romeo 147
- Alfa Romeo GTV
- Chevrolet Cavalier Z24 Coupé
- Chevrolet Corvette Z06
- Chevrolet Monte Carlo with Stock Car Body Kit
- Dodge Neon Highline Sedan GT-R
- DPRS T-230
- Eagle Talon Turbo
- Ford Falcon
- Holden Commodore SS (VX)
- Lexus IS200
- Lotus Sport Elise
- Mercedes CLK GTR
- MG ZS
- Mitsubishi Mirage
- Opel Astra Coupé
- Peugeot 406 Coupé
- Proton Satria GTi
- Saab 95 Aero
- Subaru Impreza WRX Type-R STI Version 6
- Toyota Chaser
- Toyota Supra Mk4 Turbo
- Vauxhall Astra Coupé

Plus

18 ultimate touring cars yet to be confirmed



SEE-THROUGH Look, you can see inside the cars!



There's another McRacing game you may be familiar with...

CODEMASTERS IS IN THE ENVIABLE POSITION OF CREATING NOT ONE BUT TWO OF THE MOST ANTICIPATED RACING GAMES THIS YEAR. THIS IS THE OTHER ONE

Colin McRae Rally, the first of the series on PS2 and the third overall, is coming ever closer to completion. So while we were visiting Codemasters' idyllic country premises, we couldn't help wonder how it was all coming along. In between bouts of slack-jawed gawping at the sheer luxury of the surroundings – by comparison, *PSW Towers* is made entirely of recycled baggage trolleys from a 1960s refit at Yugoslavia's Tankrush Airport – we found time to have a peek at its progress.

This game too has refocused (excuse the pun) its priorities, and now concentrates on Colin and the Ford team specifically. Real life co-driver Nicky Grist is shortly to come in and pace note the stages – just as he would a real life event – and begin work on the audio, so no complaining about inaccuracies. If it's good enough for Colin, and so on... then again, he does hit a lot of trees. Grist's just about mad enough to appreciate some of the unlockable cars, too – not just the classic Group B RS200, but the mental, race-tuned Ford Transit in full Martini livery we saw... This game's got a lot up its sleeve. Find out exactly what *ONLY* in *PSW* very soon. You may actually want to use a potato peeler to keep your eyes sufficiently skin-free.

6 PERFORMANCE RELATED PLAY

Drive well and you'll get offers from bigger and better teams, but if you don't get the job done, don't expect to hear from them again. It won't stop other teams showing interest in you, however. In this way Codemasters has also got around the familiar easy/medium/hard axis to be chosen at the start of the game, which can frequently lead to wasted time as players eventually realise they've chosen the wrong one. Cue lengthy restarting scenario.

Here, if you're dominating, the offers come rolling in from the better teams, who'll expect even greater performances from you. But if you're struggling, you're going to end up in a smaller team with lower expectations. In this way players should never get stuck and have to give up on the rest of the game, as there's a level for all but the most inept within it (MPV drivers beware), which the team-swapping system automatically finds for you. They've just got your best interests at heart, see. Aaah. Bless them. Of course, these are just offers – you can turn them down if you want. In fact, Codemasters hopes that you'll turn down some of them simply because you don't like – or trust – the manager, because that will mean they've really done their job with the characters. Above all, though, it's important that everyone can finish the game, because if you can't you'll feel like you've failed. And then, it asserts, it will have failed. It'll just be one big lump of failure sitting on your lounge floor with a ring of tears around it. And nobody wants that.

_ IF YOU'VE DELIBERATELY MANHANDLED THEM YOU MAY EVEN GET A KNUCKLE-BASED VERDICT ON YOUR DRIVING POST-RACE _

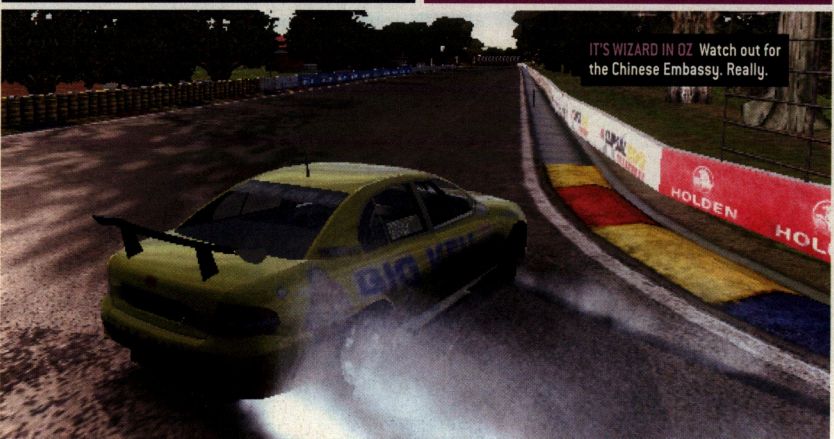
7 MY INTERESTS INCLUDE TRAVELLING

Your immense career takes you through no fewer than 11 championships, spread like an It-Girl's legs all over the world. You've got the German DTM, Australia's AVESCO V8 Supercar Shell Championship Series and the UK's TOCA Tour, among others, and if they don't get your throttle foot twitching, nothing will. And while your character is fictional, your competitors are the real deal. This has several curious effects.

Most obvious is that your team-hopping inevitably displaces real-life drivers, giving motorsport fans another small motivation for doing well – you can target all those whinging twats you can't bear, getting them kicked out of their cushy drives and into the dole queue. Anyone who has followed the British Touring Car Championship for any length of time will surely want to do this to the immeasurably annoying Jason Plato.

Consider this man for a minute, and we'll explain the relevance at the end. Even Vauxhall – the team he won the 2001 championship for – doesn't want him, and he's out of a BTCC drive for '02 despite the dearth of stars crippling this dying series. Poor Plato, eh? To be fair, when you see him on Channel 4's *Driven* he's urbane and highly entertaining, but get him on a track and he'll shove everyone into the nearest gravel trap while moaning that someone touched his wing mirror... and here comes the point of this diatribe... *TOCA Race Driver* caters for this kind of thing (hooray!) by assigning attributes to each racer, so the Platos of this world will be noticeably more aggressive in going for gaps. After all, this is clearly what actually happens, even if they have to ram you into the next timezone to *make* a gap. Of course, this kind of thing gets promised all the time, so we're not finding it too hard to reign in our enthusiasm so far. We'll see, but nobody's done hectic pack racing better than Codies in the past, so the outlook is good.

Also worthy of note is that the last race of a series might not be the last time you meet the drivers – some will turn up elsewhere too. They're not going to be your friend if you've deliberately manhandled them, and you may even get a knuckle-based verdict on your driving post-race. So if you're a bit of a Jason Plato yourself, it might be wise to invest in a gum shield. And some commentating lessons.



IT'S WIZARD IN OZ. Watch out for the Chinese Embassy. Really.





8_GIVE ME HAM ON RYAN TO GO

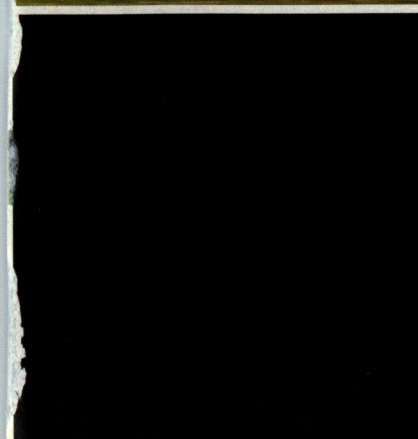
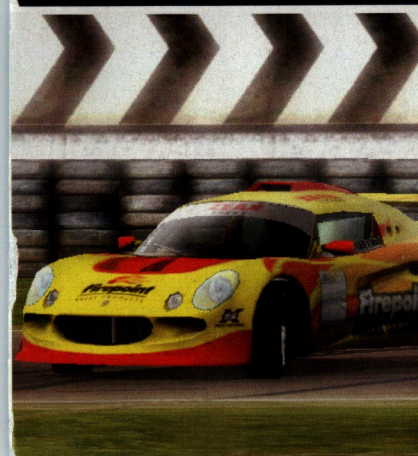
Having a storyline hasn't made the game entirely linear. That said, the tale itself *is* linear – there are certain events that must occur at set times. Beyond that it's up to you where in the world you choose to race, who you choose to race for and what car you take to the start line. Codemasters hasn't made the mistake of thinking it could write the story itself, either – or at least, not for long. Once professionals were called in, the conclusion was quickly reached that what they had was about as effective as fireproof overalls made of pork, and it was dumped. The tale was meticulously storyboarded, and the whole nine-act structure with the big twist (the surprise 'reveal') has been implemented. What is this twist? Look, we wouldn't tell you even if we knew. We're pretty intrigued ourselves and wouldn't want to ruin it. Nevertheless, barring alien insemination and the 'Oh, it was all a dream...' ending, it's not too hard to guess. So go on. Guess.

Visually it's gripping too, as the motion capture is truly impressive. The characters were actually face, body and voice captured in groups – something of a first, apparently – in order to make them more convincing, and it's worked. Professional actors from the country of the character in question were used, so we can expect less use of 'risible' and 'stupid' come the review. Codemasters' stated aim of avoiding all the usual hammy racial clichés can only help too, as for the story to be immersing it's got to have at least some sense of believability.



9 THE FAST AND THE CURIOUS

So what's in the garage? Well, 42 cars in all (see panel on page 61), of which 11 are described as 'aspirational' – supersexy vehicles of the type schoolboys dream of when not thinking about blonde Veronica from 3B and the way her skirt's shorter than anyone else's. Each one is driven by a 'pro', the best driver in any given series. Place in the top three and you'll get an offer to race this driver on a track of his choosing, and beating the arrogant swine delivers nothing less than his beautiful car. Collecting all 11 won't be easy: track knowledge is crucial, and with 38 of those it's going to take some time to do The Knowledge. Especially battling a minimum of 14 opponents, and a possible final figure of 20...





SILLY CELICA It's all a bit *The Fast And The Furious*, eh?



It's all their fault, you know

THESE ARE THE KEY PLAYERS IN TOCA RACE DRIVER, AND SOME OF THEM MIGHT SEEM A LITTLE FAMILIAR ALREADY. WHY? READ ON AND FIND OUT...

RYAN MCKANE

Who he? He is you and you are he.
What's his motivation, darling? He's got a point to prove. And he's not happy about what happened to his famous racing driver father.
Why, he's the alter ego of... Ralf Schumacher (in the brother department), Jacques Villeneuve in the impetuous young upstart stakes.



DONNIE MCKANE

Who he? He's Ryan's older brother.
What's his motivation, darling? He's been a pro race driver for a few years now, and he doesn't want to be upstaged. Apparently protective, though.
Why, he's the alter ego of... Michael Schumacher to Ryan's Ralf, but not nearly as dominant. Smug enough, though.



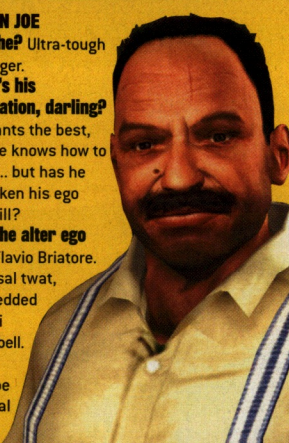
MELANIE SANCHEZ

Who she? PA – and daughter – to Cuban Joe.
What's her motivation, darling? Generally, she's happy to strut the pitlane looking so astonishing even the drivers start leaking oily substances.
Why, she's the alter ego of... Every gorgeous leading lady you can think of. Going to be trouble, then...



CUBAN JOE

Who he? Ultra-tough manager.
What's his motivation, darling? He wants the best, and he knows how to get it... but has he mistaken his ego for skill?
He's the alter ego of... Flavio Briatore. Colossal twat, but bedded Naomi Campbell. There may be a moral there.



BOBBY SCOTT

Who he? Your trusty mentor.
What's his motivation, darling? He's your pit chief – and he's always good for canny advice over the radio.
Why, he's the alter ego of... Three-times world champ, Jackie Stewart, manager of Stewart Ford F1 team – now Jaguar.



LINDA YEN

Who she? She's the dreaded 'Press' poking microphones at everybody in sight.
What's her motivation, darling? She's after the inside scoop, the real you, the finest column inches you can give her. So to speak.
She's the alter ego of... Kate Adie. So expect colossal and terrible right away (not really).



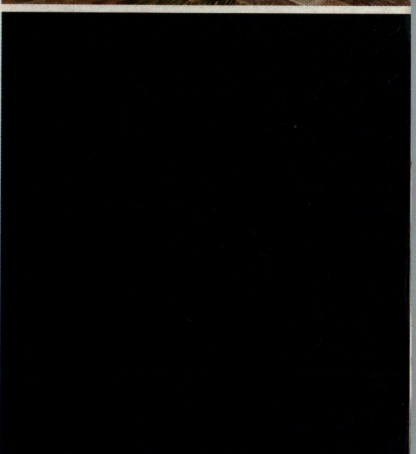
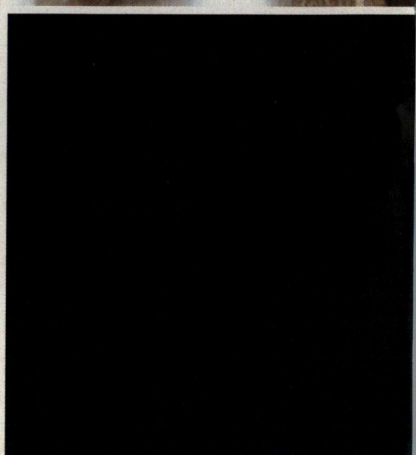
010 DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION

Of course, where there's reward there's got to be punishment. There's got to be something bad awaiting you when your otherwise immaculate, knife-edge sense of control goes spectacularly Apollo 13 and your hopes explode into space. Otherwise there's no thrill.

Thankfully *TOCA Race Driver* has ignored the tedious, unbreakable, airbagged safety smothering the likes of *Gran Turismo 3* and gone for the more entertaining option – the six-inch spike in the middle of the steering wheel.

Not literally, of course. But it was long ago realised that drivers used safety devices to increase performance, upping the perceived level of risk to exactly where it was before. In *Gran Turismo*, players use the total lack of damage or risk of control loss to bounce off everything – walls, drivers, whatever – and lap faster. There's no real drama because there's little or nothing to lose. And back in real life, do you think that Mondeo would be tailgating you quite so enthusiastically if there was a serrated hunting knife poking from the middle of his wheel rather than a nice comfy airbag? Probably not. And it's the same in games. We need some risk for it to be fun. So Codemasters has engineered lots of it.

There's massive potential for damage here, with perhaps the only flaw being that it looks so good it's almost tempting to do it on purpose – bumpers sag, drag and fall off, doors flap and get ripped off, bonnets, boots and spoilers fold into the wind and disappear, wheels sheer, axles snap, windows explode... your car can end up looking like the two original blokes in Hear'Say compared to the other three members. However, you'll never get completely cropped out of the picture in favour of the prettier, more functional cars that are still heading in the right direction, as you're always able to limp back to the pits for repairs. Even on three wheels. The one exception is a deliberate suicide mission the wrong way round the track – a head on collision in these circumstances will be the last thing your car does. The system, called Finite Element Modelling, even allows for such realism as heavy engine blocks punching through other panels. The team has been working on this for a year, even creating their own virtual crash-test laboratory. It looks fantastic. Time well spent.



INEVITABLE Go on, bend it in half. Break it. Go on.



IS YOUR EPISODE II KNOWLEDGE IN BITS?



**STAR
WARS**
EPISODE II
SPECIAL

IS IT BLURRED BY SPECULATION AND IDLE GOSSIP?
READ ON AS WE TRY TO UNRAVEL THE MYSTERY BEHIND ATTACK OF THE CLONES.

STAR WARS: EPISODE II ATTACK OF THE CLONES will explode into UK cinemas on May 16th with a welter of screaming star-craft, flashing energy blasts and the uneasy drone of bantering film critics, sci-fi buffs and die-hard fans of the series.

Sure, there'll be dissenting voices. But like *Episode I* before it, the picture will transcend disapprobation from all quarters and simply become a box-office phenomenon; loved by those who matter. And that'll be, for the most part, you lot.

What follows over the next few pages is our homage/big-up/over-enthusied revel in all that is *Star Wars*, and most specifically *Episode II Attack of the Clones*. Immediately over the page you'll find everything we could glean on the new movie, including multiple plot-spoilers and images as yet unseen anywhere else. Much of the info is still speculation, but PSW feels it's the most accurate stuff you will have read so far.

So if you want to maintain your virginal knowledge of Lucas's latest in preparation

for your first viewing, you'd be well advised to skip straight to page 74. For there, you'll find a (pretty much) spoiler-free kick off to our exclusive *Star Wars* game review double bill. We've snared the first review in the world of *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter*, while on page 78 we also present the world's first review of *Star Wars Racer Revenge*. Enough *Star Wars* for ya? Can there ever be enough? To paraphrase Chancellor Palpatine, "we'll be watching *Episode II*'s progress with great interest..." >



HAYDEN SECRET Anything would have been an improvement from Episode I's Anakin – the irritating Jake Lloyd.

CAN WE CLONE HER PLEASE? The lovely Natalie Portman returns as the under threat Queen Amidala.

A LONG TIME AGO...

Ever since *Episode I* hit cinemas in 1999, a full 16 years after the last instalment (*Return of the Jedi*), there's been moaning. Moaning that youngsters weren't seduced by the daffy antics of the oft incomprehensible Jar Jar Binks. Moaning that Jar Jar was somehow a racist caricature. Moaning that the toys of the aforementioned floppy-eared CGI-ism had become a permanent fixture on Woolworths' shelving. There was moaning from the 30-somethings that had lived the galactic dream back in the late 70s, who felt disappointed by the new picture (memory clouded by the fog of time, they erroneously bestowed upon the earlier pictures more intellectual merit than was actually there, not fully getting to grips with the fact they had simply grown up). Moaning about a lack of action, moaning about a surfeit of political wrahgling and moaning about cheesy lines. Oh, and moaning about Jar Jar, or did we mention that already? But here at PSW you can take your moaning and feed it to the Sarlacc, hit it with a double-ended lightsabre and ask a Rancor to shit on it.

Star Wars is God. Not in a goober-friendly knowing-the-name-of-the-third-Imperial-Guard-from-the-left way. Just in rip-roaring, turbulent, fascinating, inventive, thrilling journey into something beautifully familiar but at the same time unknown. It's simplistic, with a touch of depth. It's computer generated-tastic, but with room for the simple thespian craft. And it's telling the continuing tale that has kept millions enthralled since 1977. *Episode I* took \$400 million at the US box office alone. This year is a *Star Wars* year. PSW Group, begin your attack run...



JUST A LITTLE OFF THE TOP PLEASE Anakin's grown up enough to have his own sabre.

MATCHES FOR SABRES

RIPPED PLACCY CAPE REPLACED WITH A BIT OF BROWN FELT. AHH, THOSE WERE THE DAYS...

HERE'S THE FIRST LOOK AT the plastic figures that accompany *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones*. Look, it's an Obi-Wan toy in the new packaging that will accompany the toys. The motif showing two hands clasping a sabre (top left) harks back to the original packaging doled out back in 1977. A bit anal we know, but all those of ahem... 'a certain age' will look upon this with dewy eyes and remember days of yore when a mint condition R5-D4 still in its packaging was a thing of wonder and beauty.



DON'T GET COCKY KID...

OK then, still with us? Lets get cracking with some serious *Episode II* plot knowledge – but bear in mind accuracy may be a little shaky in parts due to, well... the fact that no one's seen it yet. Remember though, once you read this there's no going back.

It has been ten years since the events depicted in *Episode I*. The merry group who saved Naboo from the Trade Federation have disbanded. Amidala is now a senator to her planet and is no longer the reigning monarch; taking over the role is Queen Jamillia. Chancellor Palpatine has tried (or so he says) to reform the Republic, but has failed. Jar Jar (yep, he's back, albeit in a much smaller role) represents the Gungans in the Senate. Obi-Wan and Anakin Skywalker have been enjoying many different adventures together, which have taken place side-by-side with the young apprentice's Jedi training. Unfortunately though, the Padawan learner is tortured by nightmares about his mother.

Meanwhile a formerly respected Jedi Master called Count Dooku has left the Jedi Order shortly after the death of Qui-Gon. He's backed by a bunch of corporate forces (most probably Nute Gunray and his Trade Federation) and has taken up the position as the leader of a separatist movement. These include hundreds of star systems whose sole intention is to secede from the Republic – an occurrence that would spell disaster for the Republic.

Amidala is on her way to Coruscant (you remember from *Episode I*, the planet that's one big city?) for meetings about a new breed of army that the Republic wants to manufacture in order to deal with a highly possible military uprising. Once there, Amidala is the victim of an assassination attempt during which her decoy is killed. Amidala believes that Count Dooku is behind the attempt, but the Jedi Council and Chancellor Palpatine disagree. However, Palpatine decides that the Jedi should provide her with some bodyguards, and no prizes for guessing that, because of their history with Amidala, Obi-Wan and Anakin get the gig.

While still on Coruscant, there's a second assassination attempt, again foiled, but this time it leads to a huge chase through Coruscant's heavy sky traffic, with the two Jedi doing the chasing. The assassin is cornered by the sabre-wielding chaps but is killed by a toxic dart before any interrogation can take place. It's now that the two Jedi are given separate quests.



RANDOM SCENE SPOILER 1

HERE'S A VERY ROUGH IDEA – PIECED TOGETHER VIA INTERNET GOSSIP AND RUMOUR – AS TO HOW OBI-WAN'S VISIT TO TIPOCA CITY ON THE PLANET KAMINO AND HIS FIRST MEETING WITH JANGO FETT IS PLAYED OUT. IT MIGHT BE A BIT WRONG, BUT THEN IT MIGHT NOT.



OBI-WAN'S JEDI STARFIGHTER LANDS on a platform in Tipoca. He gets out and strides over, through bustling wind towards a tower on the other side of the platform. A door slides open and Obi-Wan goes inside. The city is entirely white.

Obi-Wan removes his saturated hood and meets Taun We, a Kaminoan. Taun We welcomes Kenobi, but the Jedi seems surprised by the alien's appearance – small head, long, long neck, whiteish/grey skin. Kenobi is told that everything is ready, and the Prime Minister Lama Su is expecting him and wishes to give the Jedi a tour of the facility.

Tipoca is a Clone Centre – an industrial factory where clones are manufactured – and Obi-Wan gets to see many things, but is particularly fascinated by the classroom full of

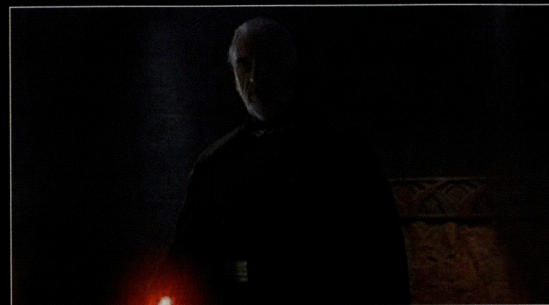
identical young lads – who resemble the young Boba Fett – all working at computer terminals. Lama Su explains to Kenobi how they've altered the genetic code of the clones so they'll be less independent than the original (Jango Fett). Consequently they are completely obedient and will do anything without question.

Shortly after, Obi-Wan is taken to meet the original from which the clones were drawn. The group waits at the door of the Fett apartment and Obi-Wan notes the lock mechanism. When the door opens, ten year old Boba Fett is there. Taun We asks if they can see Jango and they are shortly joined by Jango in an unmasked state. He is unkempt, there are scars on his face and he has a pair of odd looking tattoos etched on his forearms.

The atmosphere is tense between Jango and Obi-Wan and they spend the whole scene eying each other with suspicion. Taun We welcomes Jango back from a trip he's evidently just returned from, and when asked if the trip was productive he responds with a simple "fairly". Taun We then introduces the Jedi as "Jedi Master, Obi-Wan Kenobi. He's come to check on our progress" to which Jango replies, "That right?"

There's a brooding relationship between the Jedi and Jango, and from the outset they're very wary of each other. At this point, Obi-Wan speaks up and tells Jango that he must be very proud as the clones are quite impressive. Jango replies "I'm just a simple man, trying to make my way in the universe, Master Jedi."

"Aren't we all?" quips Kenobi.



FANGS VERY MUCH Christopher Lee as the mysterious Count Dooku, AKA Darth Tyranus.



AHHHHH! R2 as galactic gooseberry in the love match between Amidala and mini Vader.



FETTING IT TOGETHER Boba Fett is only ten years old: this is his father, Jango.

The Jedi Council order Anakin to take Amidala to Naboo in order to protect her from any further assassination attempts, while Obi-Wan is given the task of locating the origin of the unusual murderous dart. Anakin's nightmares involving his mother continue. However, he nevertheless escorts Amidala on his mission.

Obi-Wan is perplexed as to where the weapon that killed the assassin came from, so he heads into the underworld of Coruscant to meet with an old contact. The contact operates a kind of seedy bar, and it's here that Obi-Wan learns that the origin of the dart may well be the planet of Kamino.

Also thrown into this detective style yarn is the fact that there's a massive army of clones on Kamino, all waiting for war. A military faction whose creation seems to have been ordered by a fictitious leader of the Jedi?

Obi-Wan decides to visit Kamino and encounters a bunch of long necked aliens, a clone factory and a bunch of young kid clones. The young clones are all modelled after a young Boba Fett, while the main clone army are all derived from Boba's dad, Jango Fett, who Obi-Wan meets on Kamino.

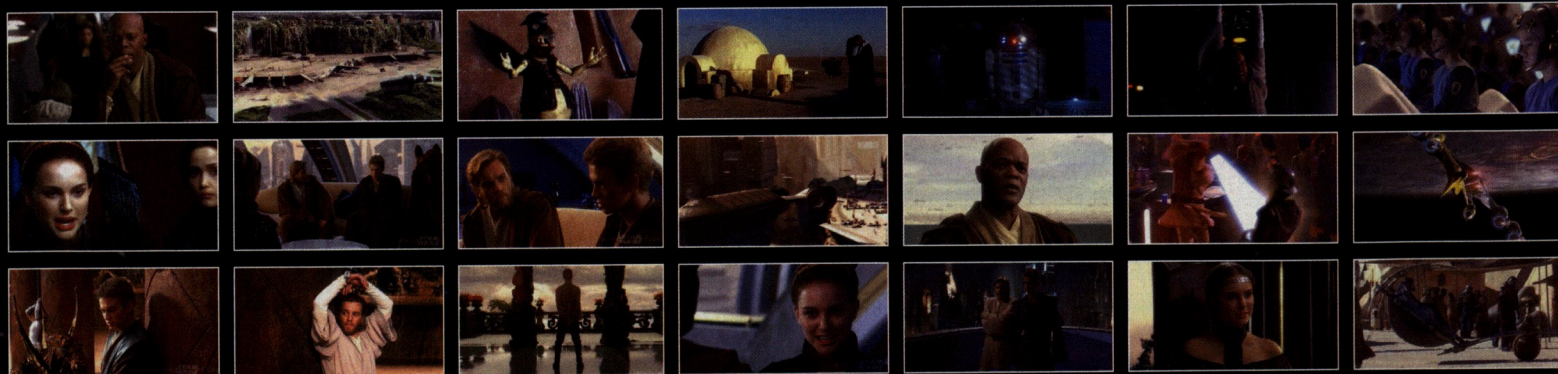
ON CORUSCANT, AMIDALA IS THE VICTIM OF AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT DURING WHICH HER DECOY IS KILLED. SHE BELIEVES COUNT DOOKU IS BEHIND IT.

I DON'T SENSE ANYTHING

Here things start to get a little fuzzy on the plot facts front, so we'll continue with some more general-knowledge-burstoids. The villain of the piece is Count Dooku, played by classic Hammer Horror baddy and Vampyros-for-rent Christopher Lee. His alter ego is Darth Tyranus – what the Jedi just don't realise for much of the film is that this fallen Jedi is now actually a Sith Lord, working, one presumes, with the treacherous Chancellor Palpatine, AKA Darth Sidious, AKA The Emperor.

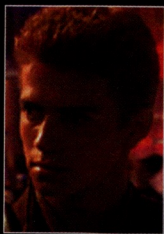
Lucas and his co-writer Jonathan Hales do not introduce Dooku to the viewer until the last third of the film, instead focusing on cryptic dialogue about him between the characters. We hear about this Count Dooku character, but his intentions and identity remain a complete mystery until later on. It's an unusual approach for defining a bad-dude in the *Star Wars* universe, but it may work effectively to build a feeling of dread and fear based around rumour and hearsay. Once his position is established in the narrative, it'll be interesting to watch how he goes about playing our heroes like pawns in a chess game.

Anakin will be depicted as a deeply troubled young individual. He'll have developed from the perky-whiny little brat in *Episode I* into a more mature but erratic chappy with a striking grasp of the Force. He'll be seen taking his first step into the Dark Side in a scene >



"MESA CULLED JAR JAR BINKSS..."

...OF THAT FACT MOST ARE ACUTELY AND PAINFULLY AWARE. BUT EPISODE II WILL OFFER UP ALL MANNER OF OTHER BRAND NEW AND FAMILIAR FACES. SO GEN-UP WITH US AS WE SIFT THE FACT FROM THE FANCY.



ANAKIN SKYWALKER
(Hayden Christensen)

19 year old Jedi Padawan apprentice. Irritable.



BARRISS OFFEE
(Nalini Krishnan)

Padawan learner of Jedi luminari Unduli.



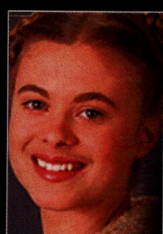
AURRA SING
(Lara Cox)

Rumoured to be in *Episode II*. Not confirmed.



BAIL ORGANA
(Jimmy Smits)

Princess Leia's adopted father. Bigger role in *Pt III*.



BERU WHITESUN
(Bonnie Piesse)

Owen Lars' girlfriend and Luke's aunt in *Pt IV*.



BOBA FETT
(Daniel Logan)

Jango Fett's son (cloned?). Baddy to be.



C3-PO
(Anthony Daniels)

Still owned by Shmi on Tatooine, and silver.



CLIEGG LARS
Jack Thompson

Marries Shmi and is Anakin's new stepfather.



CLONE KIDS
(Various)

Children manufactured in the image of Boba Fett.



CLONE TROOPER
(CGI)

The early versions of Stormtroopers. Cool.



CORDÉ
(Veronica Segura)

Handmaiden and guard for Amidala. May die.



COUNT DOOKU
Christopher Lee

Bad guy and secret sabre wielding Darth Tyrannus.



DORMÉ
Rose Byrne

Handmaiden and bodyguard for Amidala.



EETH KOTH
(Hassani Shapi)

Jedi Council Member who may see some action.



GEONOSIAN
(CGI)

Aliens native to the rocky planet Geonosis.



ISHI TIB
(Unknown)

This species makes an appearance in *Episode II*.



QUEEN JAMILLIA
(Ayesha Dharker)

The newly elected Queen of the planet Naboo.



JANGO FETT
(Temuera Morrison)

Mandalorian armour-wearing daddy of Boba.



JAR JAR BINKS
(Ahmed Best)

Represents the Gungans for Naboo in the Senate.



KI-ADI-MUNDI
(Silas Carson)

Member of Jedi council; will be called into action.



KIT FISTO
(Zac Jensen)

A Jedi Knight who may see some fighting.



MACE WINDU
(Samuel L. Jackson)

Watch out for Mace's amazing sabre duel.



MAS AMMEDA
(David Bowers)

Briefly seen in *Ep I*; will have more screen time.



NUTE GUNRAY
(Silas Carson)

Trade Federation bad boy is back, being, well... bad.



OBI-WAN KENOBI
(Ewan McGregor)

Has investigative role to play, leading to action.



ORN FREE TAA
(Matt Rowan)

A senator with a small role in *Episode II*.



OWEN LARS
(Joel Edgerton)

The young version of *Ep I*'s Uncle Owen.



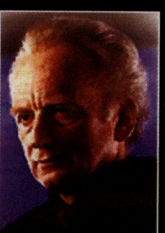
JEDI APPRENTICES
(Various)

Numerous very young Jedi are seen training.



PADMÉ AMIDALA
(Natalie Portman)

No longer Queen, now a Senator on Coruscant.



PALPATINE
(Ian McDiarmid)

Manipulates everyone and starts the Clone Wars.



PLO KOON
(Matt Sloan)

Jedi Council member involved in a big mission.



QUARREN
(Unknown)

This species were in *ROTJ* and *Ep I*; they're here too.



R2-D2
(Kenny Baker)

Sticks with Anakin and Amidala during the film.



R4-D17
(None)

A pilot droid in Obi-Wan's Jedi Starfighter craft.



SHAAK TI
(Orli Shoshan)

A brand new Jedi Knight for *Episode II*.



SLY MOORE
(Sandi Finlay)

Palpatine's weird looking Senatorial aide.



SAESE TIIN
(Jesse Jensen)

A Jedi council member who'll see action in *Ep II*.



CAPTAIN TYPHO
(Jay Laga'aia)

He replaces Panaka as Amidala's bodyguard.



LUMINARI UNDULI
(Mary Oyaya)

Jedi; master of Padawan Barriss Offee.



ZAM WESELL
(Leanna Walsman)

A female bounty hunter sent to kill Amidala.



that will be surprisingly macabre, yet touching, knowing what we do about the boy's history, and for that matter his eventual future destiny in the saga.

Amidala's character will also develop. She'll still be depicted as a feisty and idealistic young madam, but a softer side will emerge, particularly where Anakin is concerned. There's a love story between the pair of them, although it'll be very different to the one in *The Empire Strikes Back* between Han and Leia. Anakin is seriously into the idea and wants a bit of Amidala big time, but she doesn't want to give into her feelings right away. There's apparently a sequence where the pair journey to a planet called Geonosis. It has a fiery sun and is a place of rocks and horrid demonish type dwellers. The idea is that the embryonic romance visits this place (Hell, by any other name) and emerges strong and unbreakable – of course, blessed with our vision of the future, we know this can never be the case.

Obi-Wan and the other Jedi (from the Council room in *Episode I*, remember?) get to do some full on Jedi-style stuff this time round, with a far higher quota of lightsabres being drawn and ignited than ever before. Yoda has to probe the Dark Side (not sure yet what this entails) while Mace and Obi-Wan have to get into stoopid ass-busting mode, along with a bunch of around 200 other Jedi – yep, you read that right; a full on Jedi battle!

As we pointed out earlier, Jar Jar is (perhaps sadly) not dead and

buried. He's in the picture, but (hoo-rah!) his role has been significantly reduced to that of a supporting, background character (yes, we said moaning was wrong, but this is Jar Jar we're talking about here). Even so, word is the big-lugged goon's actions do lead to a major step forward towards the rise of the Empire, although his time on-screen perhaps only amounts to around 10 to 15 minutes. During his 15 minutes of fame, he does manage to spew out a bunch of stupid lines though – you have been warned.

There's no question, Jango Fett is going to be one of the stand-out characters. He's a formidable bounty hunter (rather like his son Boba grows up to be) and he causes the two Jedi masters a few problems. He's the guy that the clone warriors are based on, but fascinatingly Jango is not a strictly evil character. While he's mercenary, he also places a certain emphasis on family and wants to leave a legacy when he's dead. He'll be on screen for much longer than Darth Maul was in *Episode I*, which will thrill viewers in need of a dose of action, thanks to some spectacular CGI flying, fighting, and gadget madness.

THERE'S A LOVE STORY BETWEEN ANAKIN AND AMIDALA, ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE VERY DIFFERENT TO THE ONE IN THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK BETWEEN HAN AND LEIA.

RANDOM SCENE SPOILER 2

AS BEFORE, HERE'S A VERY ROUGH IDEA AS TO HOW AN EPISODE II SCENE WILL BE. THIS TIME IT'S A CHAT BETWEEN OBI-WAN AND THE JEDI ON CORUSCANT.



SET IN CHANCELLOR PALPATINE'S office on Coruscant, a hologram of Obi-Wan is visible in front of a large group. The group consists of Yoda, Mace Windu, Ki-Adi-Mundi and Senators Bail Organa, Ask Aak, Darsana, Jar Jar, Palpatine and Mas Amedda.

Obi-Wan has been investigating on Geonosis and reveals to the group that he's discovered that starships from the Trade Federation are taking delivery of battle droids from the foundries of the planet. "That's outrageous! The treaty forbids the Trade Federation from building up an army" comments Bail Organa. "I will bring Jango Fett back home for interrogation" Obi-Wan says.

Chancellor Palpatine points out that the Geonosian foundries are part of the Techno Union: "We will call in

their representatives and ask them a few very pointed questions" he states.

"Jango mentioned he was recruited by someone named Darth Tyrannus" Obi-Wan says and asks the group if they have an idea who that may be. "With the forename Darth, a Sith he must be", Yoda points out. Mace Windu believes that this Darth Tyrannus must be the second Sith along with Darth Maul. Obi-Wan asks if they believe he could be the mysterious Sidon-Dyas, who made the deal for the clone army. But Yoda is unsure, while Mace warns Obi-Wan to be careful, claiming "The investigation is becoming less than routine."

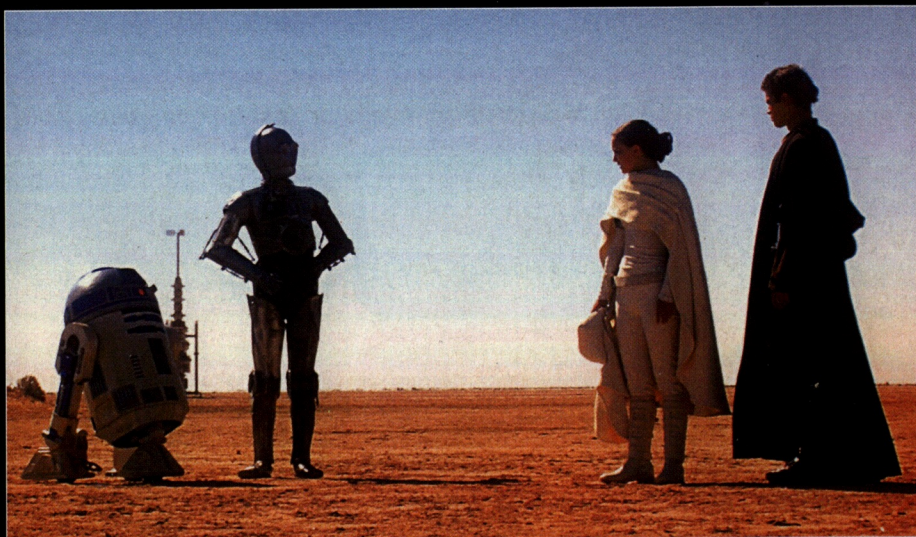
The hologram of Obi-Wan fades out. Palpatine stares at the spot where the hologram was in disbelief.



In all, from what PSW's managed to glean from websites, word of mouth and insider speculation, it appears that *Episode II* will be a totally action-packed experience. If you thought parts of *Episode I* dragged a little, here we should be privy to an all-out, gung-ho laser-mash-up. You've got the two assassination attempts and the stunning chase sequence above Coruscant, which promises to look absolutely spectacular. There are also three duels, two aerial battles, one massive land battle, three massive monsters... this is undoubtedly going to be something special. Plus, there's Anakin's continued slide towards the Dark Side...

It's looking like a *Star Wars* should be. B-Movie made big. Romance, action, silly dialogue, weapons, revelations, comedy, hyper-cool effects, a grandiose epic feel, baddies, goodies, inbetweens... This will be the movie of the year. And if you don't believe it, that's where you fail.

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I DON'T LIKE YOU EITHER... It wouldn't be a Star Wars adventure without the camp noodlings of C3PO. Naturally, sidekick R2D2 is also present.



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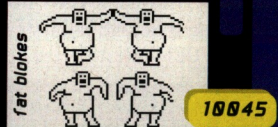
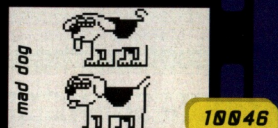
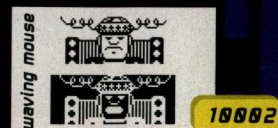
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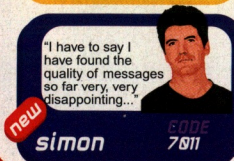
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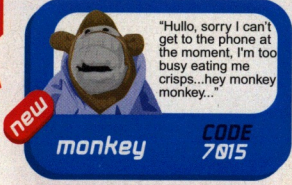
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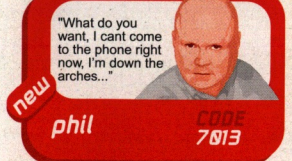


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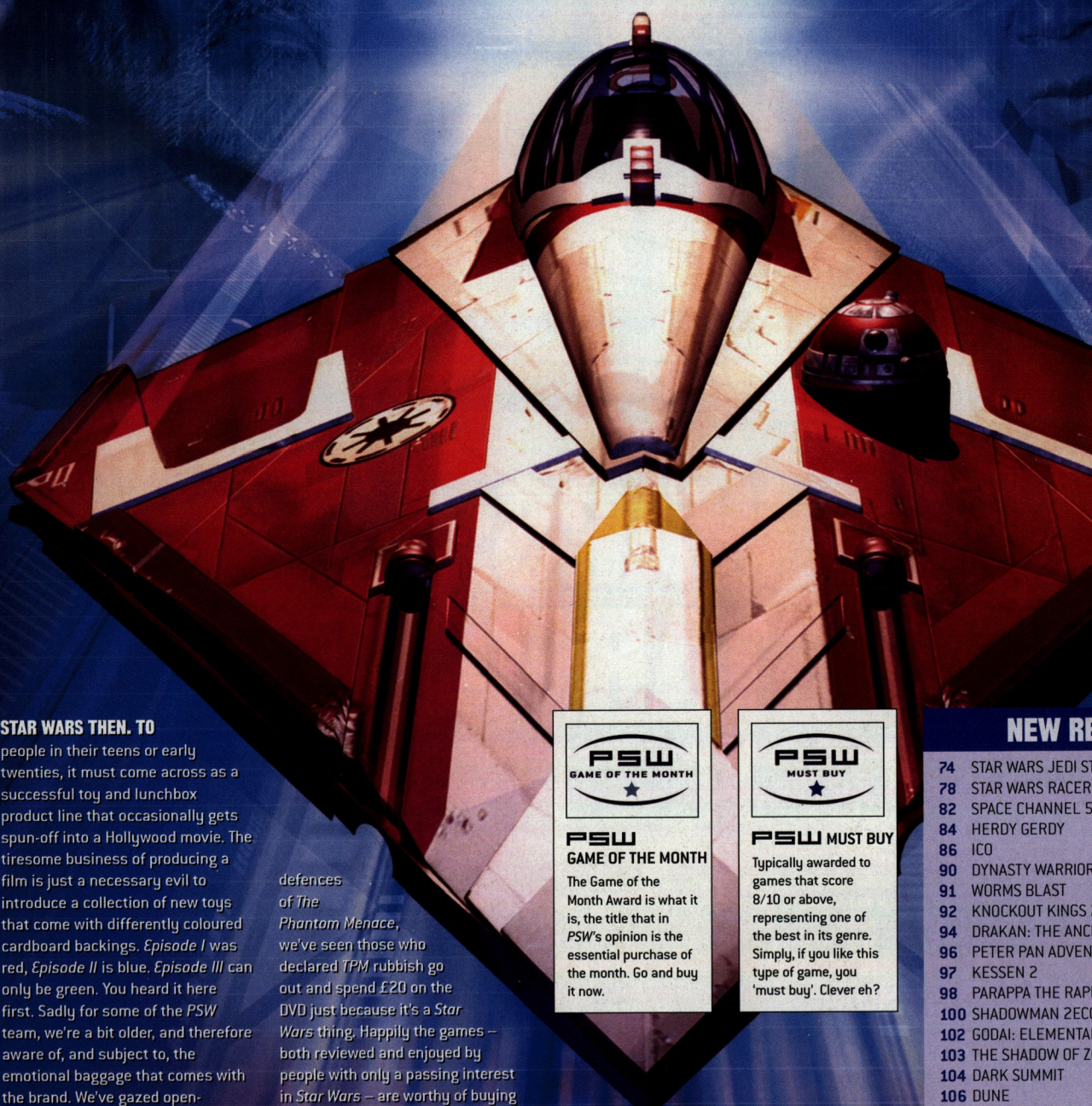
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1/10	AVOID AT ALL COSTS



PSW GAME OF THE MONTH

The Game of the Month Award is what it is, the title that in PSW's opinion is the essential purchase of the month. Go and buy it now.



PSW MUST BUY

Typically awarded to games that score 8/10 or above, representing one of the best in its genre. Simply, if you like this type of game, you 'must buy'. Clever eh?

STAR WARS THEN. TO

people in their teens or early twenties, it must come across as a successful toy and lunchbox product line that occasionally gets spun-off into a Hollywood movie. The tiresome business of producing a film is just a necessary evil to introduce a collection of new toys that come with differently coloured cardboard backings. *Episode I* was red, *Episode II* is blue, *Episode III* can only be green. You heard it here first. Sadly for some of the PSW team, we're a bit older, and therefore aware of, and subject to, the emotional baggage that comes with the brand. We've gazed open-mouthed as grown men in their thirties arrange small figurines on their mantelpieces, we've listened to

defences of *The Phantom Menace*, we've seen those who declared *TPM* rubbish go out and spend £20 on the DVD just because it's a *Star Wars* thing. Happily the games – both reviewed and enjoyed by people with only a passing interest in *Star Wars* – are worthy of buying on their own merits, regardless of your age or their cardboard backing. / GARY CUTLACK FEATURES EDITOR

NEW RELEASES

- 74 STAR WARS JEDI STARFIGHTER
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- 103 THE SHADOW OF ZORRO
- 104 DARK SUMMIT
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- 107 JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIx

DELIVERY The stations have nicely detailed letterboxes.



WARP COR Engine trails and weapon blasts all glow and shimmer as they well should.

STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER

EPISODE II ARRIVES ON PS2 WHILE CINEMAGOERS ARE STILL QUEUING FOR THE PREMIERE. THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS.

TYPE SHOOTING

PLAYERS 1-2

OUT NOW

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION

PRICE £39.99

DEVELOPER LUCASARTS

AGE 3+

SEE IT ON DVD

/ Small explosions
/ Medium explosions
/ Large explosions
/ Extra large explosions

LIFE'S GREAT WHEN YOU'RE A FAN.

You see the good in everything, your chosen brand may do no wrong. Sega fans love every game produced by

their favourite company regardless of quality, Cliff Richard obsessives buy every new recording and attend every single one of his gigs, while *Star Wars* fans snaffle out every snippet of new information like pigs after news truffles.

So, *Jedi Starfighter*, with its use of locations, vehicles and miscellaneous 'stuff' from *Episode 2*, is in the enviable position of being an utter, utter must for anyone who's ever secretly practiced use of the Force to summon a TV remote control from within the folds of a distant armchair. It's *Episode II*! In a game! Before it's even been seen in

the cinema! It's obviously going to be the best game ever! But first there is bad news...

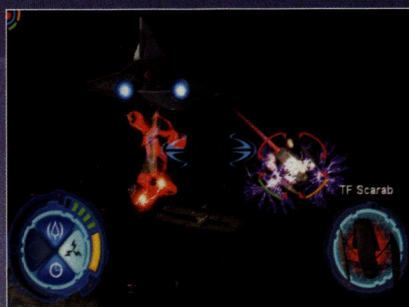
A MARKETING DEPARTMENT, FAR, FAR AWAY

"Who the hell are these losers?" says Dave, the office's biggest *Star Wars* fan, upon seeing the specially created characters you guide through *Jedi Starfighter*. They don't appear in the films, they're flying mostly unrecognisable craft and they haven't got the comforting familiarity of the *Star Wars* universe on their side. Because, while to the outsider *Star Wars* is just a collection of contrived character names, to *Wars* aficionados any product must strictly tie in with official history, timelines and recognised protocols. One extra nostril on that Gungan and it's all-out war!

Luckily *Jedi Starfighter* improves under closer expert scrutiny – that unrecognisable ship is the all-new *Jedi Starfighter* that's set to become every kid's toy of choice this summer thanks to its starring role in the big film, so at least there's one immediate nod to current *Wars* thinking. But while LucasArts' popular *Starfighter 1* character Nym has been successfully spun-off into a Dark Horse comic special (the three part *Crossbones* series), the rest of your crew and the two other ships you fly in the cooperative two-player games are fabricated. You can't buy toys of them, you won't see wire frame models of them on the DVD 'Making Of...' documentary, you won't be able to buy Lego models of them. "Created especially for the game!" may sound exciting when copied from the press

STAR WARS

EPISODE II SPECIAL



CAN U FEEL THE FORCE? The left gauge shows your Force power.



FIRE FRIGHT Big explosions: always a winner with us.



PLANET SWEET Weapons they refer to as "laser beams".

/ "WHO THE HELL ARE THESE LOSERS?" SAYS DAVE, THE OFFICE'S BIGGEST STAR WARS FAN /

release into a broadsheet newspapers' ten-word review, but wouldn't you rather be Anakin, Obi-Wan or even the wheelchair-based R2-D2 instead?

It's hoped that players will play the game then return to it again after seeing the *Episode II* movie, recognising and finding new meaning in the events with hindsight. We haven't seen the film, so we can't really comment on the authenticity of the locations, but there are certainly enough new ships and places to hint at plenty of film-game crossover action, despite the initial disappointment of the line-up. And you get to fly a Jedi Starfighter!

USE THE CONTROLLER IN PORT TWO, SIMON

People with stupid names going to places with stupid names to rescue other people with even

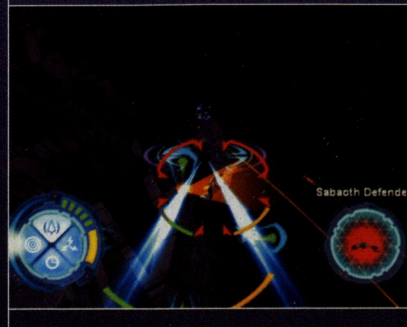
stupider names, that's what *Star Wars* is mostly about. There's more in *Jedi Starfighter*. Mace Windu has dispatched Adi Gallia to the Karthakk system. You're Adi, the new Starfighter is your vehicle, that place with a stupid name is your destination. You'll soon be careering headlong into the troops of Captain Toth. Obviously battle then ensues. So far, so pretty much identical to *Star Wars: Starfighter*, released a little under a year ago. So how is it different... and how is it better?

That's easy – it's hardly different at all and it's marginally better looking. Space shooting games always feel kind of the same, and *Jedi Starfighter* is no different. Space missions and planet missions are your two choices. Space missions see you wobbling about, constantly pitching and

OPEN YOUR MIND

ACCESS JEDI STARFIGHTER'S MASS OF BONUS FEATURES

// JEDI STARFIGHTER COMES WITH A BONUS section featuring a whole load of unlockable secrets and new things to discover. Advanced Starfighters, Tie fighters, Republic gunships and even the X-Wing are among the extra ships to locate and destroy (earn these by beating bonus objectives in the game), with extra one and two-player missions (one-player survival pictured here), concept art, movie trailers, team photos, developer commentaries and comic book art hidden in there too. You'll need to really thrash it to earn yourself a prestigious save position.



LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

FRIENDLY COOPERATIVE MISSIONS MAKE UP JEDI'S TWO-PLAYER EXPERIENCE

// ALL OF THE GAME'S STANDARD STORY MISSIONS are playable in cooperative mode, should you fancy competing with a friend or cellmate over the game's 20+ default missions. Ideal for the non-competitive friend in your life, or for introducing elderly relatives or girls to the delights of videogames, these gentle offerings appeal to the strategic side. Can you shoot each other? Yes, but you fail the mission if your mate dies. All-new competitive missions are available as hidden bonuses. Different ships are in here too, with the standard Jedi Starfighter being complimented by the fabricated Zoomer and Freefall. Make the other player have those things.



NOT FAIR. Player One: Starfighter, Player Two: some other thing.



NO, THAT'S ME. Friendly fire can destroy your co-op buddy.



ONE DOWN... Two players make short work of the mission.



IT'S TOO DANGEROUS! Player Two hangs back like a sulking girl.



STERLING VOID. Nice reflective water effects.



AND AGAIN. Blasting turrets off things: what you do.

/ MISSIONS, PLANETS AND CRAFT FEEL IDENTICAL TO LAST YEAR'S GAME /

yawing, and shooting things. The planet missions have you nipping between ground targets and aerial fighters – just as before, and just as in every mission-based 3D space shooter.

It's more of a remix of the first *Starfighter* than a proper sequel, with the game feeling like it could easily have been compiled from spare levels left over from the last year's effort. That's not meant to sound like an insult. Your choices at the start of each mission give a clue to the game's biggest new addition, with easy, medium, hard or cooperative making up your gaming choices. The new cooperative game allows impressive split-screen play for two. It's fast, relatively smooth, and ideal for two *Star Wars* fans to play out their pilot and wing man fantasy games.

SPEAK TO PILOTS LIKE YOU

The music is a beautiful classical score, with speech effects so good they put the orchestral manoeuvres to shame. "Transport this!" says your man, by way of a witty put down as you wipe out a Trade Federation transport vessel. In fact, by our unscientific guesswork reckoning, we'd say it has by far the highest amount of chatback any PS2 game has so far managed – they never shut up. Requests for assistance, advice on appearing enemies, criticisms from other pilots not convinced

by your amateur Jedi abilities – there's more inane, pointless banter in here than in an average episode of *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*.

"Shoot when I shoot," says your trainer. "Do this," says someone else, "Go there," says his friend; "No, sorry, I meant over there," the game continues, permanently chatting away to you and anyone else that'll give it the attention it craves. "I need a little cover, here!" shouts your pilot, requesting help from a wing mate during a heated fire fight.

Wing mates, you say? Pressing L1 brings up a separate navigation menu, which commands your Jedi mates in the immediate vicinity to do your bidding. Make them attack your current target for a little extra help, or bring them in to cover you and defend your arse from being melted and dispersed among the stars. Problem is, these wing men are hopelessly ineffective, rarely doing much damage.

"Clear your mind and select the power you would like to use", is the training mode's instruction as to how to activate your Force powers. It goes on to explain in a quieter voice that what it actually meant was you use the d-pad to switch between the four force powers highlighted in that round gauge in the bottom-left of the screen, then press circle to fire it up. You're allowed one Force attack every 30 seconds or so, best of which is the shield. Time it badly and it just works



as a regular laser deflector, but time it well and Bob's your father, Luke, as a perfect application reflects shots back at enemies. It adds a nice bit of tactical depth to your space fighting, with the other three Force weapons acting like your usual – but visually pretty – special attacks.

Underneath, though, there's not much else in the way of groovy treats. The levels and craft are created of the same pastel and slightly washed out colours of *Starfighter 1*, with missions, planets and craft all feeling identical to last year's game. Once you've seen and attacked one massive spacestation you've seen and attacked them all. It's disappointing that with all the creative license afforded by the *Star Wars* universe, what's here is a standard 3D space shooting game.

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

The space missions look good, with PS2 doing stars, spacestations and the odd trade federation ship very well – see the impressive smoothness of space for yourself on this month's DVD. Down on the planets things aren't quite so good, as land tends to come with a slightly poorer frame-rate and the odd twitch. Back up in space, mission three takes you on a protection racket, picking turrets off a spacestation and zipping back to protect the delicate *Liberator* from attack. Hammering the

turrets off the big ship gives you plenty of time to appreciate the detail, but also exposes the same flaws of every space shooter – it's not much fun constantly revolving while trying to target a small icon in the distance. It's the way 3D shooters have always been, and why they're often so very dull.

For the most part you're better off just sitting there, forgetting about which way up you are, spinning around, throwing out random pot-shots in the direction of each red arrow. Thankfully, *Jedi Starfighter* doesn't feature much in the way of this basic shooty stuff, with the majority of your missions taking on more complex forms than just rotating in the void. It's more enjoyable to play when land the varied land targets, but it doesn't look so good. So that's your trade-off – it's all about compromise.

That's the thing about *Jedi Starfighter* – it all hinges on the quality of each individual level. Play a poor one that just involves shooting distant targets and you quickly become bored almost to watching the news. But stick on one of the back-and-forth planetary assaults, and you're left in no doubt as to why people like *Star Wars* so much. Therefore, with quality battles in the majority, *Jedi Starfighter* becomes a game we like quite a lot, despite being nearly identical to last year's prequel.

/ GARY CUTLACK



BANDITS ON MULTIPLE VECTORS Divert transdrive couplings to inverted phase plasma coils, stat!



PLANETARY ASSAULT SYSTEM Backgrounds: often nice, sometimes not that smooth though.



VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Over 20 big missions
- Enjoyable co-op games
- See *Episode II* things now!
- Smoother than *Starfighter 1*

DOWNERS

- Still the odd jerk in places
- Very similar to the last game
- Space fighting is always dull
- Fabricated characters

GRAPHICS - Solid, but spoiled by the odd jerky moment

7

SOUND - Near-constant radio chit-chat. Great music

9

LIFESPAN - 20 missions, unlockable secrets. It'll do nicely

7

OVERALL SCORE

Essential for *Star Wars* fans and quite a good choice for gamers in general too, thanks to its above average action. Not the prettiest game, but about as good as space shooters can get.

7



STAR WARS RACER REVENGE

THE POD RACE WAS ONE OF EPISODE ONE'S FEW REDEEMING FEATURES. IT'S PERFECT VIDEO GAME MATERIAL. LET'S SEE HOW IT ACQUITS ITSELF..

TYPE	RACING
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	RAINBOW STUDIOS
AGE	3+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Mental action from the exciting later courses / Two-player battling / Boonta Eve Classic footage	

YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHAT THE 'revenge' of the title refers to, so let us first calm your deepest fears. This racer isn't taking revenge for *Star Wars Super Bombad Racing*, the big-comedy-headed cart-racing atrocity vomited onto PS2 last year. Fortunately. Revenge for that could only come with the public gassing of one Mr Binks, JJ, accompanied by the hysterical screams of George Lucas himself. No, the revenge extracted here is for events that took place on a console far, far away – Sega's dreamed Doomcast... Ah, we mean doomed Dreamcast, of course, although it's getting harder and harder to tell. You may also have seen the first *Episode One* racer in your local arcade, complete with twin throttle peripherals and an irritating child wobbling them about, shrieking.

The Dual Shock's analogue sticks cater for this layout admirably, with each side as a throttle for its

respective engine – the well coordinated only need apply. Fortunately for parents who want a go, people who get easily flustered and the wildly inebriated, the default setting is far simpler. We're of the opinion that including standard car racing game controls (cross for throttle, square for brake, left stick for steering) is a good idea, as *Racer Revenge* can get hard enough as it is, without steering like a crippled jumbo jet in a crosswind. The one player game becomes seriously nails around half way along – through the Pod Racer Open, the second championship of three – and there's probably enough going on for most people to deal with anyway.

This is not to criticise the handling or controls, however; merely to point out that the hardcore *Star Wars* fan and the casual player alike will find something to challenge them. Creator Rainbow Studios has a considerable bank of credit here in the sumptuous, air-conditioned futurism of PSW's no-expense spent offices, thanks to the time-destroying multiplayer game of *ATV Off Road Fury*, although it did blow some of it on the slightly disappointing *Splashdown*. It's a group of people that clearly understands the virtue of gigantism in track design, and how to create moments that make you swear with surprise. Obviously, as this

quad bike/pod racer isn't playing for keeps, the first thing you want to do for fun is drive it off a cliff and survive. Or explode and die. Whatever, as long as there are enormous speeds and enormous drops involved, we're going to have fun. So yes, *Racer Revenge* has these moments, although by default they're never going to be quite as impressive in a machine that half-flies as on one that really shouldn't even move.

ROCK ME AMIDALA

The tracks themselves are spread across the varied worlds of the *Star Wars* galaxy, such as Tatooine and Mon Calamari, the latter of which



SMOKE ME A KIPPER The particle effects are very attractive.



FLYING GREEN THING Above some sand! Is this helping? Is it? Shall we point out the wires too?



MAJ VENT-URES IN BLUNDERLAND Thousands of horsepower and next to no view. Try it. It's deadly.



DARTH PUNK You get the proper Ep. II stroppy teenager. Smile!



roughly translates as My Squid. Nice one George. For the less *Star Wars* savvy, these essentially boil down to more familiar themes, such as jungle, water, lava and desert tracks. Most benefit from some entrancing detail or inclusion, such as the massive Jawa sandcrawler on Tatooine – and it's perfectly possible to fly between its huge, unforgiving tracks. It's a good place to scrape off any pods that have been riding you, too, although chances are they'll try to do the same thing to you. A few tracks feature walls that seem to have this specific manoeuvre in mind (very useful they are too), but again, when it comes to *whose* face it is plastered to it, never forget that It Could Be You. Don't underestimate the viciousness of the galaxy's power-crazed scum.

POD ALMIGHTY

Less functional but way, way more impressive than such walls is the water on the Grand Reefs track. It's astonishingly realistic, and stained a beautiful red by the light of the alien sky. You won't see the impressive wakes of *Splashdown*, of course, as you never touch it, but even this can hardly detract from the effect. The visually variety of tracks like these also make them easier to learn, which is always welcome. And of course, all you

need do to discover *exactly* how impressive they are is slip the PSW DVD into your machine – your lovely PS2, that is, not your pod racer. The PS2 that was once described as 'looking like Darth Vader's toaster'. Full marks to that man, whoever he was.

Make no mistake: learn these courses you must. You're unlikely to win on any first time. Each one is a convoluted squiggle of alternate routes and damaging surprises, and needs to be fully credited to your brain bank before the best lap time can be prised out. For a start, you're not going to know which of the routes is actually the fastest until you've tried them all and compared them. And while the other craft generally follow whichever variation you take, enough will strike out alone to be of help. We say they're of help, despite the fact that they might be on a quicker piece of track, because often as not you'll see them crashing down to your path again in a cloud of dust and smoke – sometimes on top of you. If nothing else, it tells you there's another way to discover (perhaps the path to The Dark Side?).

Generally the pitfalls and shortcuts of the courses are a pleasure to discover, filled as they are with pod-stopping pylons, jumps and flat-out-if-you've-figured-the-knack corners, but not all of them are so inspiring. The jungle courses in

/ EACH TRACK IS A CONVOLUTED SQUIGGLE OF ALTERNATE ROUTES AND SURPRISES /

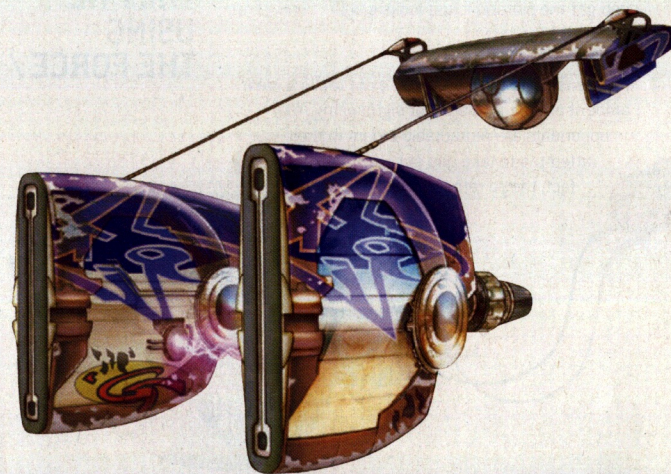
"CAN'T GET THE PARTS, MATE"

WOULD YOU BUY A USED POD FROM THIS MAN... THIS, ER, THING?



WATTO'S GARAGE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE game, and not just so you can admire his detailed and convincing model – these upgrades really affect your performance. You've only so much spending power, and blowing it all on acceleration and top speed might well be tempting, but it's unwise. Doing so would leave you highly vulnerable to attack and unable to repair quickly enough, something your extra speed will struggle to overcome – your competitors are absolutely determined when it comes to physical contact, and the chances of avoiding damage are slim.

Furthermore, ignoring the cooling improvements limits your speed boosts, as running the temperature too high causes engine damage and, eventually, total pod failure (ie, explosion and death). More cooling means longer and more frequent boosts. But boost is useless without a decent top speed... How you balance these attributes can be the difference between death and victory. And the difference between joy and shattered joypads.



A WIPEOUT FUSION It's a pretty standard hover-racing game, only with *Star Wars* in.



CD MULTICHANGER AS STANDARD The new Ford Focus: a slightly more aggressive design.



WHERE AM I? Sadly the best view of the pods gives the worst view of the tracks.

particular don't do it for us, as they seem to lack the easily recognisable sections of the others, and blur into a rather bland set of mistakable corners as a result. Visually they're perhaps the least impressive too, with angular, boringly textured grass banks that aren't high or steep enough to justify the clonking redirections they mete out. Such disparities only serve to damage the suspension of disbelief, causing the damper of scepticism to explode and the spring of incredulity to ram right through the bodywork of faith into the air. Thus the whole limo of stretched metaphors grinds to a halt at the side of the highway of... oh, you get the picture. It just looks silly.

TAKING THE SITH

Still, as is often the case, there's not really a great amount of time available for sightseeing. Your opponents are remarkably ardent in their attempts to take you out – in fact, they'd rather shove

/ THE OTHER RACERS' SUPERNATURAL TENACITY REMAINS ANNOYING – PERHAPS THEY'RE USING THE FORCE /

you into a wall and explode than pass you. In some ways this is fun, as it avoids the rather sterile 'racing' that afflicts titles such as *GT3*, where you simply blast into the distance battling only tedium and the desire to go for a walk in the fresh air. In other ways, however, it's intensely, unendingly, Jamie Oliver annoying. Get stuck in the middle of the pack and you can barely steer, often being forced down routes you don't want to take and rammed mercilessly into every available rock face. Your ship can be on the verge of extinction within barely half a lap, and coupled with an audible damage warning as irritating as a smoke detector with no kill switch, life rapidly begins to suck.

Mercifully, you're able to repair damage as you fly, so it's possible to get back on track if only you can stay out of trouble long enough. Even this is hard, however, as some opponents seem so intent on removing your pod from the race and your soul from your body that they'll even hang back if you slow down. Hitting the boost has little effect if they're alongside you, and getting rid of them is about as easy as getting rid of your own shadow at noon. Once your health has sunk far enough, you'll become even more of a target for racers eager to score a KO, so calamity begets calamity and you're

going to throw the pad. On the other hand, KO-ing other drivers nets you cash bonuses from Watto, giving you greater spending power in his garage, so you'll be doing exactly the same to them. It also gives you a good reason to duke it out in some entertaining pod-pranging rather than circulating alone and unchallenged at the front until it all stops. It's often great fun, although their supernatural tenacity is annoying at times. Perhaps they're using The Force. Goddam rebel scum.

The only way to get the better of the battling pack is to upgrade wisely (see the panel on the



JAWA 'BOUT THAT THEN That dust will only make navigating this sandcrawler even tougher.



CHECK THIS, BRIAN Engines obscuring view? Is that right?



ACTIVATE SALT BEAM Snails of the future: rocket powered, enjoy racing, equipped with lasers.



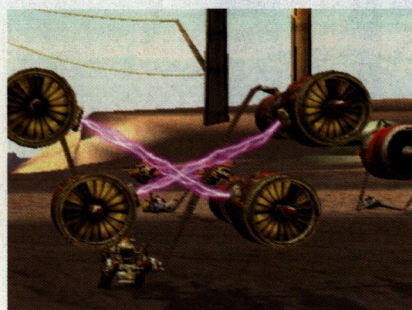
HEADING STRAIGHT TO THE GIRLS' CHANGING ROOMS The invisibility spray ran out by the time the robot got to its feet.

WE ARE THE POD PEOPLE

SO WHAT'S RACER REVENGE LIKE WHEN YOU GET PLURAL ON ITS EPISODE II ASS?

THE SHORT ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS THAT IT'S OK – no more, no less. There's a disappointing amount of fogging, however, so any opponents better know where they're going before they start their pod. Pop-up scenery irritatingly blights the more complicated levels, and generally the game's visuals sink from mostly pretty to mostly underwhelming, blighting what was a classic opportunity for multiplayer racing. Still, there's a fair grid of CPU-controlled opponents between the two of you, so the races can be surprisingly unpredictable – getting involved in a drawn-out ruck with somebody else seriously damages your chances of victory. It never approaches the instant playability of *ATV's* lifespan-extending multiplayer though, and that's perhaps the greatest shame. Unfortunately, the quest for the perfect multiplayer *Star Wars* title continues...

previous page). But even if you upgrade with the foresight of a supreme universal being made entirely of energy, that second championship is going to be hard. At this point you simply don't have enough Trugats – the currency in which you're paid – to get your pod on a level with the others. Fortunately you can look forward to far more performance to come, as there are gaping wastelands to the right of all your default stats. Maxing them out takes time, but it's truly worth it. We're not so sure the difficulty curve of the game is particularly well-judged, however, as it reaches



WAITING IN VAIN My lovely jumbo! Where's the rest of it?



BLUR OF SPEED You won't last long if you treat your chariot like this – check out the lack of healthy green bars on the right hand engine.



its greatest intensity in the middle. The beginning is easy simply because it's the beginning, letting you get used to things in a standard-ish pod; by the middle section you're outclassed, and by the end, you've caught and passed them in the technology race. Even Sebulba, the best racer with the best pod – and your sworn target from the very outset – isn't much of a challenge by then.

SORRY ABOUT THE MESS

Fittingly, however, the big showdown comes in the shape of the Boonta Eve Classic, the very track that was The Third Watchable Bit in *Episode One* (the other two being Darth Maul's brief lightsabre battle and all the footage of Natalie Portman). Another slightly disappointing aspect is how little time it takes you to get there. With just 13 races in the single-player tournament, it'll all be over in three or four hours. Still, the desire to upgrade all the pods unlocked the first time will keep the Phantom Mentalists playing, even if the less avid among you will have long since gone outside for a walk. The other extras, unlocked on completion of each sub-series in the tournament, are nice enough but nothing to write home about – art galleries for the drivers, pods and planets.

/ THE DESIRE TO UPGRADE ALL THE PODS WILL KEEP THE PHANTOM MENTALISTS PLAYING /



CUT! There are many shortcuts, but otherwise you can't stray far.

Comparisons with *Wipeout* are inevitable, and we have to say, in this case they're unfortunate. *Wipeout's* vehicles actually feel like they're floating; those in *Racer Revenge* do not. Graphically it rarely comes close either, but at least *SWRR* doesn't subject you to the random irritations of off-screen weapons launches and sudden, unavoidable failure. This also has the benefit of being *Star Wars*, and even includes *Episode II* details such as the teenage Anakin, all of which will make it instantly more desirable to many, despite its comparative inadequacies. It's not the definitive *Star Wars* game you might be hoping for, and neither is it particularly innovative as a racing game, but it's almost certain to keep you entertained for a few hours. It'd be a better present than a purchase, perhaps, so you might want to start practising those Jedi mind tricks on your relatives. And if it works better than threatening to hold your breath until you die, let us know.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Lots of tracks
- Fast and smooth
- Episode II Anakin
- A considerable challenge

DOWNERS

- Opponents can swarm on you
- Track quality varies
- Two-player rather foggy
- Brief single-player game

GRAPHICS - A mixture of pretty and disappointing

7

SOUND - Sporadic authentic music, decent announcer

7

LIFESPAN - Short single-player – and multiplayer's weak

6

OVERALL SCORE

Racer's Revenge is odd. On occasions you'll find it hilarious fun, but on others you'll just be frustrated. And before you can come to a definitive conclusion, it ends.

7



PERFECT 10 A 100 percent view rating
— the whole world is watching!

SPACE CHANNEL 5

PRESS BUTTONS IN TIME WITH MUSIC. IT'S MORE FUN THAN IT SOUNDS. IN FACT, IT'S MORE FUN THAN JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.

TYPE	DANCING
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	SEGA
AGE	3+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Extra scenes! / Shorter pants! / Flashing lights!	

"ALIENS HAVE INVADED AND ARE forcing people to... dance!" is the only plot explanation offered as to why you're expected to steer a lady

through the year 2499 in time to music. Your first clue is that this is a Sega game, hence the bright colours and the fact you'll have it completed within a day. Oh, but what a day!

Upon starting, the screen is immediately filled with pinks, reds, yellows and blues, just like in that episode of *Changing Rooms* where the young couple committed suicide after seeing their new lounge. It's bright all right, with primary coloured

aliens shooting at Japanese space tourists, robot babes dancing in impromptu cargo bay discotheques and 4/4 beat house music aliens coming at you through exploding television-monster debris. You don't need an imagination — there's a whole one right there on the screen.

ONCE MORE, THIS TIME WITH FEELING

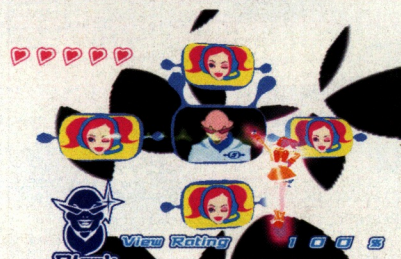
What you do need, though, is ears. A rudimentary sense of rhythm would come in handy too, as would the ability to judge games on how much fun they are instead of how long they last. Blink (well, leave the room for an hour) and you've missed it. Your performance is scored on how many people are watching your Space Channel broadcast. Let your rating fall too low or lose all your lives on a boss fight and it's over, but that's not likely to happen. Seeing the Game Over screen is a rare

occurrence for only the complete beginner or the totally inept. After all, you're just repeating fairly simple move sequences. The unlikely event of you playing poorly causes Ulala to dance with less enthusiasm, also changing the music to a slightly more downbeat, woozy style and losing viewers in the process. The control-reversing space monster Giant Evila takes the most beating, with inexperienced players sometimes needing as many as two or possibly even three goes to get past... her. As far as challenges go, *Space Channel 5* is just about as small and as basic as they come.

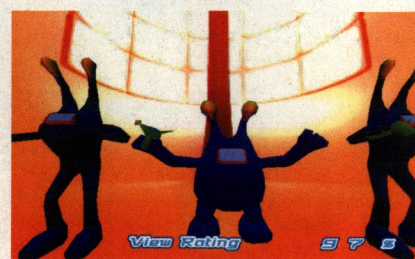
Minor longevity is added by the dishing of a score for each level, which encourages completists, diehards and losers to never miss a beat and score 100 percent on each level while rescuing every captured human. We've done it and you don't get anything extra for it. And even if



PIPE CLEANER Trousers make this one of the less-popular levels.



A DRAWN BLANK Things go double-surreal in the Blank Zone.



ALIEN DANCE FARM The Morolians — forcing people to dance!

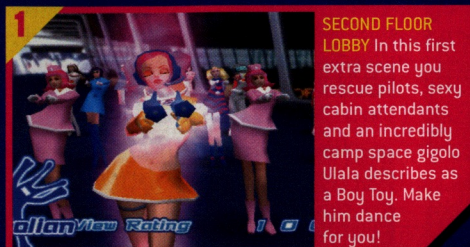
EXTRA MODE!

COMPLETE IT (EASY) TO OPEN NEW SCENES (A BIT HARDER) AND VIEW ALL THE CHARACTERS (MARGINALLY HARDER STILL).

THE KEY TO DOING WELL IN SPACE CHANNEL 5 LIES IN rescuing all of the hostages, beating all of the bosses and witnessing each type of alien. The game keeps track of your progress via its Character Profile screen, which rates your

performance and lets you view data on each person/alien/boss you encounter. Many of them are hidden on the new scenes that are only accessible on Extra mode, so you need to complete the game to open these new scenes

should you wish to rescue Space Kung-fu Man, the sexually confused Boy Toy or the captured newscasters. You even get to play The Alien Knockdown Quiz while jiggling through the TV studio. Go on, admit it – you want to.



1 SECOND FLOOR LOBBY In this first extra scene you rescue pilots, sexy cabin attendants and an incredibly camp space gigolo Ulala describes as a Boy Toy. Make him dance for you!



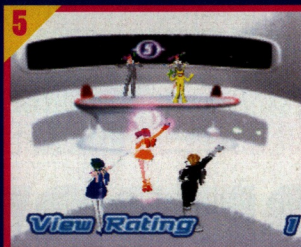
2 THE AIRDUCT Home to the longest sequence of button presses in the game. We reckon it's about 30 in a row you need to pull off in time to the tunes to clear the level perfectly.



3 GARBAGE ROOM Hard to play thanks to a vicious mix of humans and aliens, both of which require a different button to rescue. And it's faster, too. Concentrate, or lose your viewers!



4 SPACE KUNG-FU MAN! The guys in Extra mode are all much more bizarre than the regular guys you usually encounter. Rescue him and he joins your troop, bringing kung-fu dances!



5 TV RECORDING STUDIO Those damn, dirty aliens have taken the newscasters hostage. Dermot Murnaghan and Katie Derham need your immediate dancing assistance.

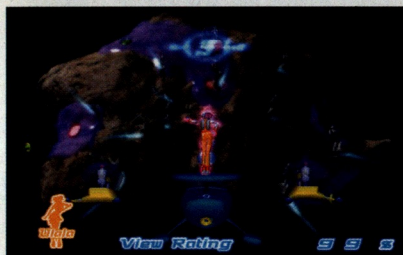


6 CHARACTER PROFILE Where you can see how many of the game's characters you've encountered. Completing it and playing through a second time is essential to see it all.

you're a completist, a diehard or a loser, the game's size – even with the marginally tougher additional scenes that open once the game's been completed – is still irrefutably and disappointingly short.

IT'S 'THIS' GOOD. SEEP

But – and here comes the really-hard-to-quantify bit – it is funny, cool, and quite possibly the most amazingly enjoyable game yet created. If we were speaking this review to you in conversation, you'd be able to hear the enthusiasm in our voice. We'd be accidentally spitting every time a word with the letter 't' was used! If you were here you could lose an eye, such is the rigour with which we would be waving our arms about in an attempt to hammer home *Space Channel 5*'s inbuilt feeling of happiness and joy. It's fun! It's a laugh! It has a great story! The music's great! You'll go back to it for more again and again!



ROCKING OUT Rival Jaguar challenges you amongst the asteroids.

And crucially, your button presses are performed precisely in time with the music. There's nothing worse than having to time your moves with the game's prompts rather than the music, a fault that spoils many 'rhythm action' experiences. *Space Channel 5* features perfect timing, with music and sounds oscillating in perfect harmony.

/THE SHORTEST GAME WE'VE EVER SEEN, BUT ALSO THE MOST ENJOYABLE/



IT'S A TRIP They're the least dangerous aliens, ever!

You never need to look at on-screen instructions either (unlike in fellow beat game *Parappa 2*, reviewed on page 98), it's enough to simply listen to the spoken "Up! Up! Down!" commands and repeat them on the pad, while ogling whatever sexy space-fox or alien takes your fancy. It's the future – anything goes.

Space Channel 5 is the shortest game we've ever seen, but also the most enjoyable. We love it more than anything, being that it's one of the few games we return to just for fun. It's an utter classic, but something that may be completed in less than an hour simply can't be given a score higher than an eight, otherwise we'd get letters of complaint and people would become confused. We can't be doing with that.

/ GARY CUTLACK



SPACE TOURISM We'd like to buy those photographs.

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- Stunning musical soundtrack	- You'll complete it on day one	
- Great voice acting	- You only press buttons!	
- Fabulous to look at	- The sequel's out in Japan	
- 60Hz option for full screen fun	- Eww, Dreamcast games!	
GRAPHICS	- Nice, but simple. Good legs	7
SOUND	- You'll be humming it 'til you die. Promise	9
LIFESPAN	- One hour, but jeez, what an hour	4
OVERALL SCORE		8
Chances are anyone that's desperate to play this kind of short, kooky and niche game has already done so to death on Dreamcast. But if you are, and you haven't, you really should.		



EXTREME CLOSE UP: Kids: always getting excited.



COME GET SOME Obviously we're quoting her out of context.



BORING "Many years ago, a development team started a game..."

HERDY GERDY

NO BLOOD. NO VIOLENCE. NO PROSTITUTES. NO GUNS. NO SEX. NO SWEARING. NO SKATE ROCK. NO SWORDS. NO PROBLEMS?

TYPE	ROUND 'EM UP
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	EIDOS INTERACTIVE
PRICE	£44.99
DEVELOPER	CORE DESIGN
AGE	3+

FINALLY, A GAME PITCHED

exclusively towards the farming community. John Craven must be desperately working out how to

incorporate a games review section into *Countryfile*, as *Herdy Gerdy* – a bizarre mixture of animal care and action/adventure game mechanics – finally emerges from its protracted development gestation period.

Sounds good, but the world of games has changed a lot in the three-or-four-or-more years *Herdy* has been fermenting in the Core Design laboratory. The exciting use of "hand-drawn" 3D characters is its big selling point, a supposedly

brave new direction that all games of the future will use. Maybe it seemed exciting 32 years ago when the project was first conceived, but in this age of vibrant and electrifying cel shading that fills contemporary games with more colour than a blushing rainbow, *Herdy Gerdy's* blotchy "hand-drawn" look seems a throwback to how games were five years ago.

"It looks like an N64 game!" is the uncomplimentary reception *Gerdy* gets from passers-by, with its square trees and blurry, flat colours ruining the Herculean labours of the animators. It gets a bit jerky sometimes too, especially when spinning the camera about to try and see what the hell your little man is up to. All that waiting, and for this?

Plus, whoever was supposed to be working on the game camera for the last few years should've spent a bit less time on the internet during office

hours, and a little bit more time making sure the floating camera doesn't get stuck on trees and houses and actually works. It catches on the cliffs, gets totally confused when you run through trees and unfortunately often hinders your progress. Also, when the camera does free itself from a lump of scenery it resets itself to its close-up setting, requiring a bit of fiddling to restore it to the most useable 'zoomed-out' setting.

HERD IT ALL BEFORE

The herding in question is the game's highlight, with the array of devices and doops (the things you round up) making for some excellent strategic action. The chicken-like pink ones are jumpy, reacting to your every move, while the big-eared ones are more reluctant to move, but, thanks to their superb hearing, can detect your musical calls and walk for much longer distances. Avoiding



MONSTER CRUNCH Pink and brown - Herdy's entire palette.



HAVE YOU SEEN MY COCK? Chicken fact #1: Chickens are the closest living relatives of the T-Rex!



GRASSY KNOLL Cow fact #1: A cow chews its cud (regurgitated grass) for up to eight hours a day!



/ BEING LECTURED BY A TALKING SQUIRREL JUST ISN'T ON /

monsters (who fish them out of their pens with rods) adds danger, while extra herding devices make it more complex. The herding's good. We like the herding.

ALL ALONE IN SPACE AND TIME

The problem is that *Herdy Gerdy*'s story and presentation have been left back in the mid-90s. It's an old-fashioned affair, with each talking animal character voiced by a sweet-sounding nine-year old child. In this age of clubbing pimps to death in *GTA3*, being lectured on how to save your game by a talking squirrel just isn't on. It feels so old and laden with clichés that even the first hour or two of gentle training quickly becomes tiresome.

As does the rest of it. The story refers to The Legendary First Acorn. One of your first tasks is finding a pair of 'Magic Boots'. You're guided along by a short-sighted mole who wears glasses – just like all of the short-sighted moles throughout the history of children's literature. All of the normal characters have voices of permanently amazed nine-years-olds, except for Grandma who unsurprisingly sounds exactly how grandmas always sound in cartoons.

Yep, it's a clichéd game for children all right, despite assurances to the contrary. It's like Nintendo has been bought by Disney and is being run by a resurrected Mary Whitehouse, such is the nice, sweet and inoffensive nature of proceedings.

Not that that's a reason to hate it, it's just that, as grown-ups, we're a little tired of being told what to do by cheerful talking animals. You're a squirrel working in a menial job – what have you got to be so damn happy about?

That said, the game begins with the intense childhood horror of many tabloid news reports – Herdy goes into his dad's bedroom to find that Daddy won't wake up. He hasn't died of cancer of carbon monoxide poisoning, he's just been put under a spell. It's your job to... yeah, you can guess – plod along carrying out tasks for locals before eventually saving the day.

It's still rather loveable in a youngish, retro kind of way, with no glaring gameplay flaws to spoil your herding fun. In fact, if you're under 12 years old, and a girl, this could well become your favourite game ever. But if you're a strapping, hairy young man with ladies, cars, strong lager and money on your mind, *Herdy*'s slow, cute approach is going to bore and patronise well beyond normal tolerance levels. So, as most of PSW's readers fall nearer the latter category, it gets a six.

/ GARY CUTLACK

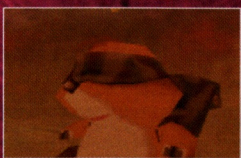
AHH, PWEDDY GWAPHICS!

NOTHING SAYS "I LOVE YOU" BETTER THAN THE VOMITOUS CUTESYNESS OF HERDY GERDY!

THE ONLY WAY HERDY GERDY COULD appear more young-looking would be if all the graphics were coloured in with crayon – and the colourer had gone over the lines and spilt cola on it all.

Sweet little girls, smiley animals and pink monsters so as to not be overly scary – it's as nice as a teddy bear in a pussy cat jumper knitted by an old woman for charity. Considering the

ultra-violent prostitute-murdering *Grand Theft Auto 3* has been at number one in the sales charts on and off since its release, do we really need or want this kind of cuteness on PS2?



SQUIWWELL! He's so cute!



GWANDMA! She's so cute!



WISE OLD MAN! He's so cute!



DOOPIES! They're so cute!



GERDY! He's so cute!



ICKLE GIRL! She's so cute!



MOLEY! He's so cute!



ICKLE GIRL #2! She's so cute!

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Well acted, if childish voices
- Has 60Hz no borders option
- Herding elements are good
- Harder than it looks

DOWNERS

- Pasty brown characters
- Very kiddy storyline
- Talking squirrels
- And a mole. Called Moley

GRAPHICS - Great – if this was still 1997 or an N64 game **5**

SOUND - Binky-bonky cheerful happy tunes **7**

LIFESPAN - A whole lotta worlds, extras, herds and story **8**

OVERALL SCORE

So sweet it's hard to dislike it – but we still do, because it reeks of Nintendo/Disney cuteness that seems very out of place on the grown-up PS2. But if you're a little girl – it's brilliant!

6



ICO



IT'S A BANDAGE NOT A HAT, AND THOSE HORNS ARE HIS OWN. BUT BOVINE PROTRUSIONS ARE THE LEAST OF ICO'S WORRIES.

TYPE	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	ONE
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	SONY
AGE	7+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Charming puzzles / Soothing ambience / Vertiginous drops / Scary shadow monsters	

IN SOME WAYS, ICO IS THE VERY

opposite of that other castle-based actioner, Capcom's *Devil May Cry*. *DMC* took out all the slower aspects of survival horror – the puzzles, the item collection, the endless cut-scenes – and concentrated fully on massively beefed up combat. *Ico* goes the opposite way... mostly. For a start, it would be unfair to characterise this as survival horror, despite the ruined, gothic setting and the devilish monsters attempting to halt your escape. Your time in the castle is spent almost exclusively solving puzzles, to the extent that what little combat there is often merely serves as an incentive to finish things quicker, a countdown in which to secure the way forward. Fortunately, however, the game has also taken *Devil May Cry*'s lead in abandoning the tedious search for broken amulets, rusty keys and fresh ammunition that so often bogs down these games. Cut-scenes are also mercifully infrequent.

So what's it all about? *Ico* is actually the name of the small boy you play, and those horns aren't just a comedy hat. The locals in his home village – who presumably all voted Conservative at the last election – couldn't cope with these cow-spikes growing from a child's head, so instead of giving him some Lego and a really, really strong nail file for his 12th birthday (when the horns grew really

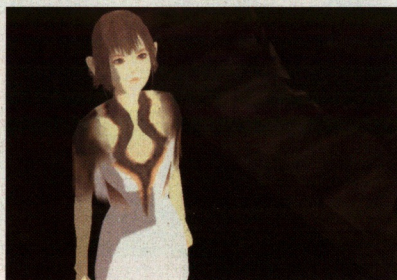
big), they decided to brick him up in a second-hand castle and run away. Clearly such a pointy boy was bad luck, they reasoned, although being locked in a castle to die is probably worse luck. Once there, he dreams of a pale, ethereal princess who has suffered much the same fate as him. He immediately plans to escape and rescue her from evil, from her demonic tormentors.

So there's not much in the way of fighting, few weapons and nothing to discover except the way out. Sounds a little dull? Wrong. While the pace is undeniably slow, the game is never boring. Despite how it may appear on paper, the whole is somehow greater than the sum of its parts – each aspect combines with the next to create a highly

individual, incredibly absorbing and bizarrely calming experience. *Ico* has an undeniable charm that cuts through the fake marble veneer of Cynicism many on this magazine affect, exposing the softer (but still cheap and flimsy) Chipboard of Wonder beneath.

THE AGE OLD CROFT OF GAMING

Yes, there are parallels with the *Tomb Raider* games. There are boxes to push and pull, levers to locate and gaping chasms to bridge, but *Ico* has taken on none of the irritating flaws of those games. For a start, you aren't forced to spend hours searching for a key or an artefact to solve the 'puzzle' of how to open the next door, and you



PALE AND INTERESTING She's a girl of very few words.



THAT'S ME IN THE CORNER The puzzles are conveniently compact.

YOU SPIN ME RIGHT ROUND BABY...

LIKE A RECORD. OR AT LEAST, LIKE A WINDMILL. IT'S ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING MOMENTS IN A STRIKING GAME



BLADE RUNNER Time your leap and start heading right...

YOUR ADVENTURES AREN'T LIMITED TO BIG DARK rooms inside the castle – in fact, some of the best sections take place outside, in particular along the teetering battlements of the fortress accompanied by killer drops. However, the scene with the windmill is perhaps the biggest stand-out event. It's a moment for particular daring and great timing – a nice break from the more sensible, thoughtful bulk of the game – and there's even a consolation if you mess it up. Any fall shouldn't be fatal so long as you hit the millpond beneath, and there's the added bonus of one of the most beautiful water effects on PS2. It's almost worth falling off on purpose.



OOPS Get it wrong and down you go. But no tedious reloading!

never need divine some random configuration of objects to do it either. What doors there are simply need one thing to open them, and that's your rescued princess, Yorda. She alone has the magical ability to unfasten the bizarre portals that occasionally block your way. Actually *getting* her to them is the trick, though, as her frailty limits the routes she can take. She is rarely, if ever, capable of following the same path as *Ico*.

You won't think of it in such a segmented fashion anyway, as getting the 'key' to the door is not the puzzle... or what passes for puzzles all too often. The doors never feel like they're the ultimate goal anyway, as the occasional loading pauses in them are never long enough to break the continuity and ruin an otherwise seamless journey.

Ico uses three dimensions very well, so between you and the exit is a brain-teasing collection of ladders, hanging chains, walkways, lifts and half-hidden corridors. There's always a way, and a little lateral thinking will always reveal it. And very satisfying it is once you've done it, too. What's refreshing is that the puzzles never particularly stand out as problems, small chunks that must be dealt with in order for the next bit to load. The whole game is like this; the objective is to progress and escape. There's no sense that yet another barred path has been chucked in to merely



BOY MEETS GIRL Boy escapes from cell, rescues girl, takes her round to a quiet bit of the castle and tries to 'accidentally' touch her. Fails. The end.



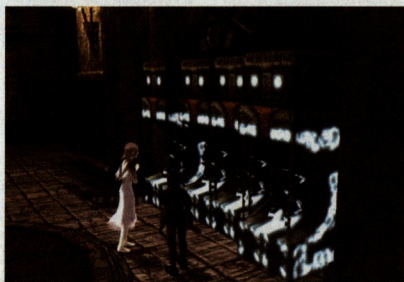
NO, AFTER YOU Controlling Yorda – indirectly – is refreshingly easy. The exterior scenes seem even more vibrant after the castle interiors.

/ INSTEAD OF GIVING HIM SOME LEGO FOR HIS 12TH, THEY BRICKED HIM UP IN A CASTLE AND RAN AWAY /

to slow the pace down between fights, or that you're just going through the motions. How refreshing. How *Ico*.

ICO RUMBLE

Another conspicuously absent staple of many such games is the hidden trap. There are no pits full of spikes, no collapsing floors and no strangely rhythmic bursts of steam from the walls. Despite their inclusion being so predictable, at first we kind of missed the danger: the feeling that some dastardly unseen force is throwing its deadliest shots at you and (hopefully) failing. But on reflection, such panic moments and their inevitable sudden deaths would have ruined the game's flow.



GET INTO THE DOORS Only Yorda can break the magic seals.

You see, it's almost impossible to die in *Ico*.

It is, however, possible to fail. Leave Yorda alone for too long or travel too far without her and the spirits come to drag her away. These shadowy monsters are something of a pain in the arse, to be honest, as you've only got one button to fight with. It pays to look for a sealed doorway nearby before engaging them, as unlocking them fries everything in the area, saving you minutes of thrashing. It also saves the occasional frustration of being repeatedly knocked down the instant you get up, which reduces you to watching as the game simply ends itself beyond your control. This is rare, it has to be said, but when it does happen it's severely irritating. Yorda is gone and it's game over. >



MISCARRIAGE Locked up for horns – by a man with no face! Burn!

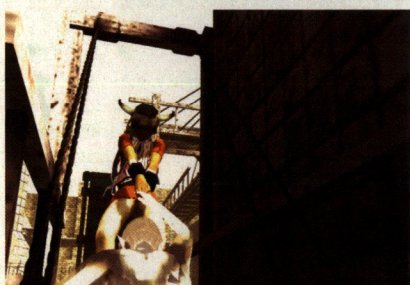


LETS VEGETATE The trees' movement is awesome. Really.

And that's the most common way to lose in *Ico*. Occasionally you'll drop too far for this small boy to survive, but it's unusual. Falling by accident is reserved for the extremely cack-handed, as this hero is one of the most intelligent yet. Approach a ladder and he'll climb it, without needing several extra button presses and a yes/no question and answer session. Stray near a ledge and he'll catch hold and save himself. Climb up a chain and he'll turn automatically to allow for the platform at the top, instead of stubbornly halting and waiting for you to press the 'let go' button accidentally. *Ico* does all the things it's obvious you want to do with the smallest amount of hassle, again leaving you free to enjoy the journey. How refreshing.

HEALTHY THIS GIRL SHE IS

Yorda is also winningly bright, despite her pallid, washed out look. You can call her at any time with R1, and the camera pans to show her location. The only time she won't respond is if she physically can't reach you – nevertheless, she's fairly game, and can be coaxed to leap into the void or struggle up a rock face as long as you're there to wrap your arms around her and comfort her. Aww, shucks. Despite all the danger and intense burgeoning love among the flagstones, *Ico* remains incredibly chilled out. How? There's the lack of extraneous objectives; the absence of equipment screens and



TOUCH ME Ico tried everything, but Yorda simply wouldn't do it.



FALLING IN LOVE She never quite makes it alone. You have to save her!

/ DESPITE ALL THE DANGER, ICO REMAINS INCREDIBLY CHILLED OUT /

weapon management; the brief loading times; the continuous gameplay; the way the protagonists slump into a sofa to save; the three-dimensional thoughtfests of the puzzles and the quiet, distant nature of the voices. And then there are the ambient sounds. It's so calm, and even when you're under attack there's nothing intrusive, no music – just a forbidding, ominous escalation of sounds. It's really a very charming experience, and one that's just about as original in concept as you can expect a game to be whilst remaining playable. So unless you absolutely, positively have to kill everyone in the room, spend some time with *Ico*.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Oddly calming
- But still taxing
- Looks fairly pretty
- Mostly non-violent

DOWNERS

- Combat can be annoying
- Textures rather repetitive
- Occasionally confusing
- Graphics too washed out?

GRAPHICS - Detailed characters, slightly repetitive

8

SOUND - Very understated and very effective

9

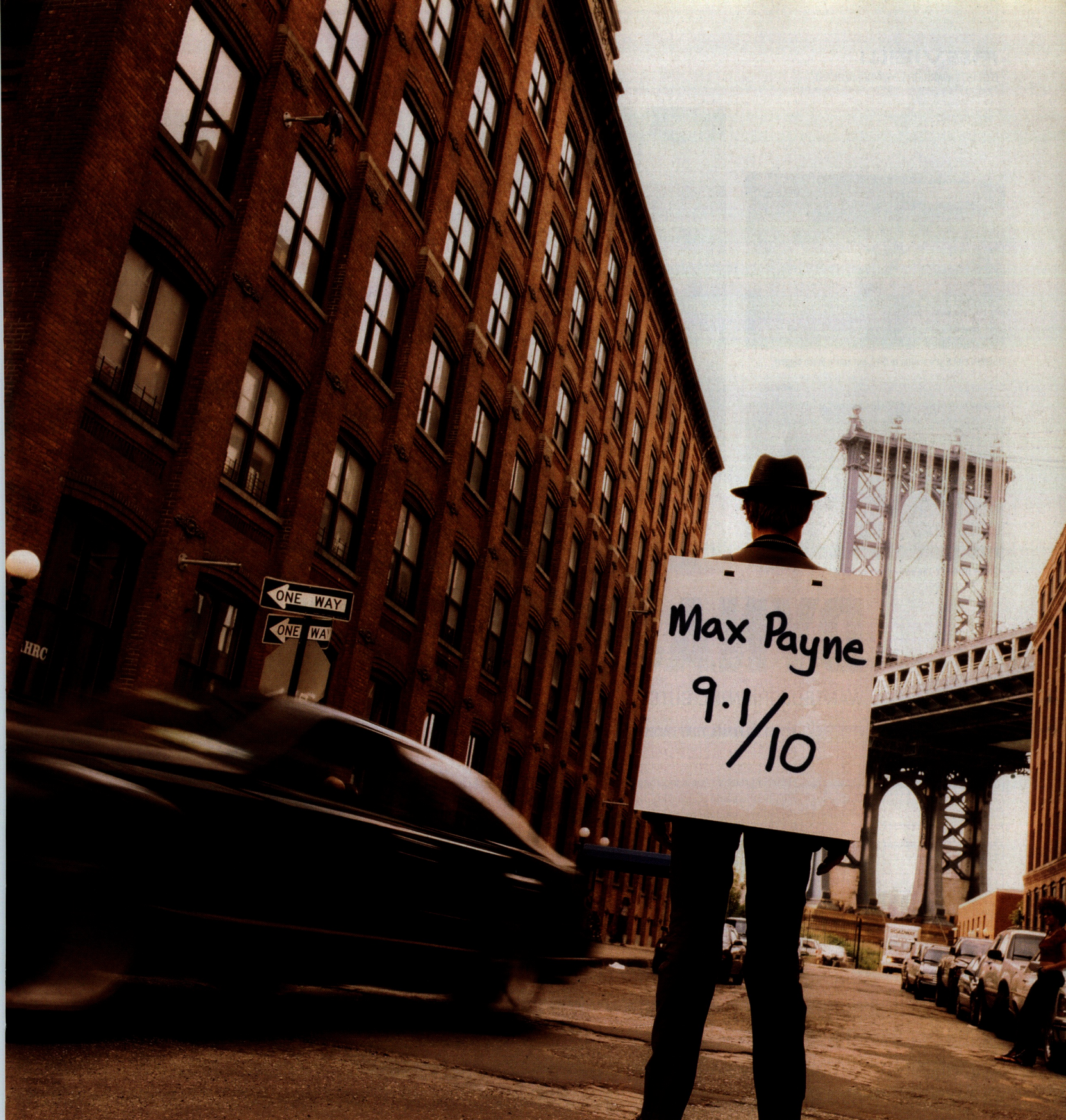
LIFESPAN - It's a considerable challenge

8

OVERALL SCORE

Ico is highly unusual in eschewing violence without tipping right over into sickeningly cute territory. It's calm, entertaining and even makes you feel quite chivalrous.

8



Reviews you can trust.
The UK's most visited gaming website.*

* Independent ABC Electronic audit: 692,239 unique users per month (March 2001)

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www.gamespot.co.uk



MUSOU PIECE It's similar to DW2, but much, much bigger!



JOIN MY DYNASTY The split-screen action is a welcome addition.



DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

WANTED: ORIENTAL BUTCHER. MUST HAVE OWN SWORD. MAGIC ABILITIES AN ADVANTAGE.

TYPE	FIGHTING
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	APRIL
PUBLISHER	KOEI
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	THQ
AGE	11+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Fat man with nasty claws / Bloke in a dressing gown / Pang Tong with his essential decapitation	

IT'S A DILEMMA THAT FACES

anyone deciding whether or not to buy the latest Westlife, S Club 7 or Hear'Say release – is it worth the purchase or will it be the same as everything that's gone before? A similar quandary awaits owners of *Dynasty Warriors 2*. Initial impressions of the sequel are that it's been given nothing more than a nip and a tuck in all the right places.

Graphically it's had the equivalent of a few dabs of touch-up paint from Halfords rather than a full re-spray. It looks more defined with much more prominent colour and detail, which is most welcome when you've got a screen bulging with hordes of violent, angry men belting each other into a mushy pulp.

Thankfully these additional visual delicacies haven't reduced the number of heaving bodies, nor slowed the insane pack fighting pandemonium in the slightest. *Dynasty Warriors 3* remains one of the most thrillingly chaotic and remarkably unique

fighting experiences on PS2. Witnessing the blinding colour, flailing limbs and unbridled violence exhausts the eyes like no other fighter.

In addition to the Musuo [campaign] mode there's now the immensely enjoyable Time Trial, where you have to kill 100 enemies as quickly as possible, and the more straightforward Survival mode. The overall game now has 23 stages [nearly three times the number of levels as in *DW2*], while the number of characters has risen to over 40. Most significant is the inclusion, finally, of a two-player game. It's a welcome addition that unfortunately suffers from an awkward camera angle that's a little too close to the player to offer a good view of the battlefield. There's also some terrible fogging.

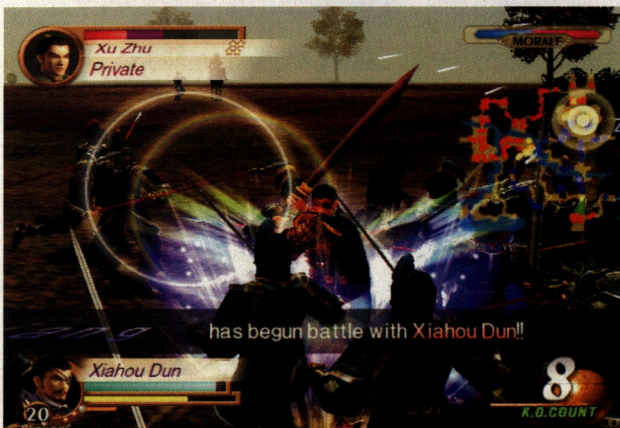
NO TIME TO ENJOY THE VIEW

With so much going on in the game, it's inevitable that something has to give. In the case of *DW3* it's the viewing distance. In both single and multi-player, the horizon doesn't stretch much further than the end of Gerard Depardieu's nose. Hills, trees and elephants pop up almost out of nowhere, and yet strangely it never really spoils your enjoyment. There's so much mayhem that you haven't got time to admire your surroundings.

Raising the temperature further still, you can now string together much more elaborate combos and take to horseback, or even jump on an elephant, in the midst of battle. Your bodyguards can be issued orders, and you can collect up items strewn about the battlefields for use in future skirmishes. But don't let that fool you into thinking there's any confusing strategy involved. These novelties are merely sparsely sprinkled garnishes on top of the craziness.

Dynasty Warriors 3 is incredibly simple to get into and very difficult to put down. Despite the repetitive gameplay, it's endlessly gratifying to lay to waste an entire army of rampaging madmen with the astoundingly powerful attacks. Is it worth getting if you own *DW2*? At £40 we'd have to say maybe not but if you've never experienced the bedlam of *Dynasty Warriors*, this is extremely rewarding. It may lack the depth of dedicated fighting games, but it's much easier to get to grips with, and the sheer scale of battles is impressive. This is absolute carnage on an almighty scale.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



YOU'RE DUN FOR NOW The melees can easily get clustered.



JUSTIFIED NASTINESS It's a violent game. It was a violent time.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Remarkable scale
- Plenty of missions
- 40+ characters to unlock
- New Time Trial mode

DOWNERS

- Not that different from *DW2*
- Intrusive fogging
- Confusingly chaotic at times
- Can become repetitive

GRAPHICS - The numbers are impressive. The fogging isn't

6

SOUND - Rock music is totally out of place

5

LIFESPAN - There's loads in here – it should last for ages

7

OVERALL SCORE

A remarkable fighting experience that's strangely compulsive, despite a considerable lack of depth. If you're bored of *Tekken* and *Dead Or Alive*, this is the perfect solution.

7

WORMS BLAST

NEW MONTH, NEW WORMS GAME. WELL, NOT QUITE, AND THANKFULLY THIS IS A REAL REMIX OF THE WORMS TEMPLATE.

TYPE	PUZZLE
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	APRIL
PUBLISHER	UBI SOFT
PRICE	£29.99
DEVELOPER	TEAM 17
AGE	3+

IT'S THE SIMPLE THINGS IN LIFE

that are the most enjoyable: weekend lie-ins, heart-lifting birdsongs, Kelly Brook. It's a similar situation with

games. For every shelfload of complicated graphical jaw-droppers there's a tremendously simple idea that proves far more rewarding. Games like *Tetris* and *Bust a Move* don't need astounding visuals and convoluted plots when they're so immediately addictive. The only problem with these pick-up-and-play masterpieces is the slew of lazy cash-ins that milk the idea until it's barely recognisable.

So it was with some trepidation that we took receipt of a game that looks ominously like *Bust a Move* and *Puzzle Bobble*. *Worms Blast* is unashamedly similar with its coloured block-popping premise. The difference here is that *Worms Blast* doesn't so much tinker with the formula as totally re-shape the whole premise, all within the familiar *Worms* universe.



THE STAR'S THE STAR Just avoid the stars in the water...



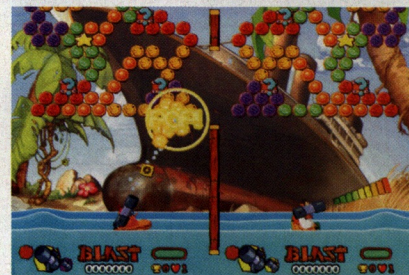
INTOLERANT INVERTEBRATE He's an angry, violent worm.

The general idea goes like this... Popping groups of similarly coloured blocks with appropriately coloured ammo causes them to disappear. Hit them with a different coloured grenade and they'll change to that colour instead. It's a frantic race to keep your screen clear of these blocks. You also need to take advantage of the moments when the barrier between the two players drops, allowing you to blast your opponent and drown them before the water gets you.

A selection of worms weaponry is on hand to knock circular blocks out of the sky, with the traditional crate power ups falling to earth to aid your endeavours. Familiar worms characters with



BRICKING IT Welcome to the next generation of gaming.



RING WORM You have to try to drown your pal. Nice touch.

varying attributes can be selected, and they all aim in the customary *Worms* fashion. The biggest innovation is that your little pink wrigglers battle it out from the precarious position of a little floating raft. This gives rise to the challenge of having to move left and right across the water before aiming, accounting for the swaying movement that makes stopping laboured and imprecise.

The biggest problem with the *Bust a Move* games was that they weren't much fun on your own. *Worms Blast* annihilates any similar worries with a huge single-player puzzle mode. Travelling around a map of the world, you're faced with over 60 different puzzles that are increasingly taxing but also tremendously rewarding. A Tournament mode, where the aim is to stay alive for as long as possible, adds some deviously difficult challenges to the mix.

Worms Blast is one of the best puzzlers on PS2, not that it has much competition at the moment. As a single-player challenge with plenty of longevity only *Fantavision* betters it, and as a multiplayer experience it's tremendous fun. Even so, we would have liked a little more room for devious strategies when it comes to trying to drown your opponent, and maybe a simplification of the gameplay would have helped its immediate appeal, especially to younger players.

Unlike the answer to the question "What is life like for a woodworm?", *Worms Blast* is far from "boring". And unlike that lame joke, it should bring a smile to your face if you give it a chance. Just don't expect anything too groundbreaking.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



TEAMWORM Two player mode isn't as good as *Bust a Move*.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Variety of modes
- Decent tutorial
- Familiar weaponry
- Good fun in single-player

DOWNERS

- Water movement is tough
- Initially confusing
- Not as good as *Bust a Move*
- Weapon icons are too small

GRAPHICS - Pleasant, simplistic 2D cartoon visuals

6

SOUND - Sparse effects and the usual comical voices

6

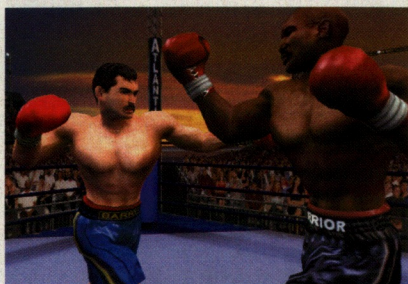
LIFESPAN - At last, a puzzler with single player longevity.

7

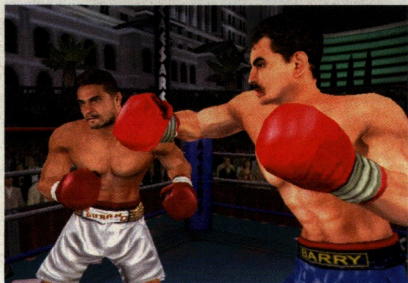
OVERALL SCORE

A massively addictive single-player challenge that translates particularly well to a multi-player format. We still prefer the *Super Bust a Move* for our puzzling sessions.

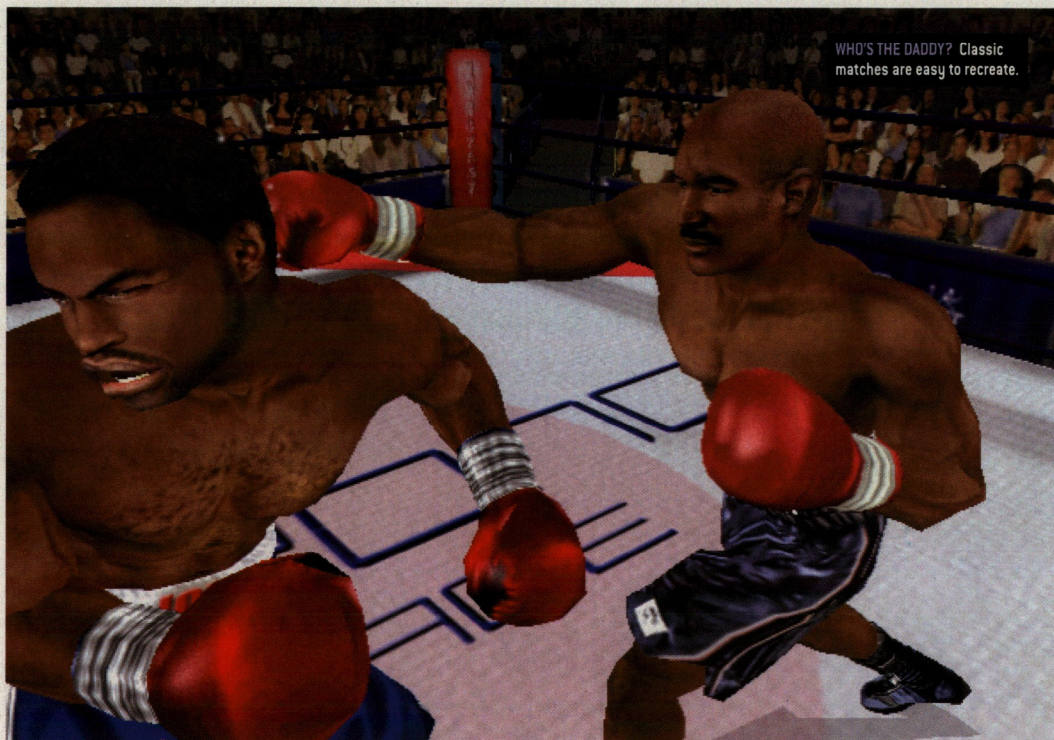
7



CATERPILLAR The 'tache was digitally modelled from 5000 hairs.



THE BARRY BATTER The boy McGuigan takes Vegas by storm!



WHO'S THE DADDY? Classic matches are easy to recreate.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002

NO POPSTARS, CELEBRITIES OR ROBOTS HERE, THIS ONE'S ALL ABOUT THE REAL DEAL.

TYPE	BOXING
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	EA
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	EA
AGE	3+

SEE IT ON DVD

- / Furious fisticuffs
- / Lewis getting a pasting
- / The flying spittle of Ali
- / Devastating knockouts

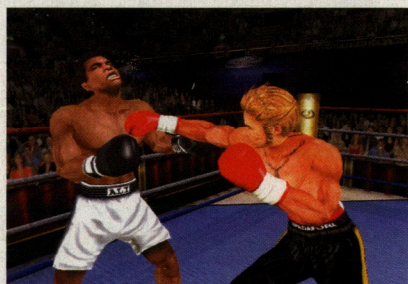
THE NUMBER SEVEN MAY BE LUCKY

for some, but for a video games journalist it's a bloody nightmare. A 7/10 rating invariably means a tortuous day of writing lies ahead. Such is the case with *Knockout Kings 2002*. It's a Contender, but not The Greatest – nothing much to criticise, nothing much to get too lathered up about – that it makes

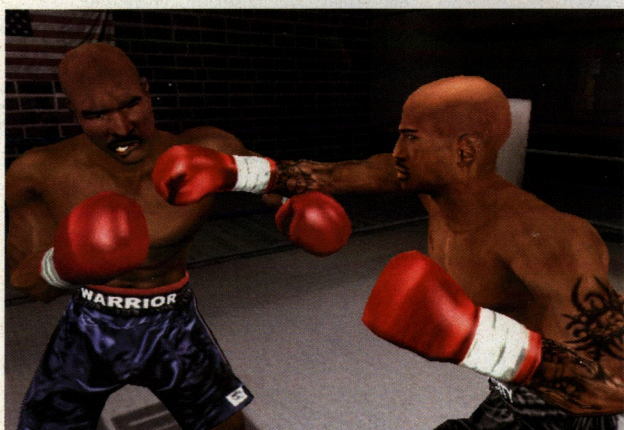
entertaining you for the next ten minutes a near impossible task. Let me know how we get on...

Some of you may be familiar with the *Knockout Kings* series – it's been around for a few years and, if we're honest, hasn't really changed a great deal from one version to the next. Fighters come, fighters go, but the basic formula remains much the same. We've always considered it the purist's choice of brawler, largely because of its commendable and unwavering commitment to portraying realistic pugilism. The temptation must have been there (especially in light of the hugely successful and mildly comedic *Ready 2 Rumble* games) to take a more arcadey approach, but the developer has stuck by its guns and produced another true-to-life boxing simulation.

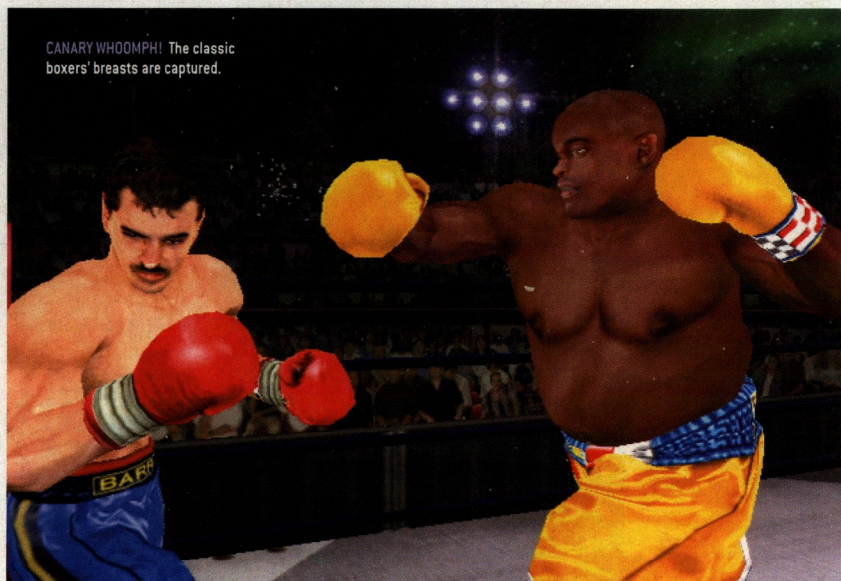
No sweeping changes then, but the familiar formula has been tweaked and fine-tuned for the latest 2002 edition. The most visible improvement is in the motion capture of the fighters. Each character now moves around the ring far more freely and with greater speed and agility, the lack of which was our main criticism of previous *Knockout Kings*. New 'motion blending' merges different moves together seamlessly, making it difficult to tell where one animation starts and another ends, so there's a great deal more fluidity in the fighters' movements. The other main area of improvement is the speed of the fights – upped considerably for the 2002 version – allowing fighters to trade blows at an alarming rate until their stamina is completely sapped.



BOOM BA YAH! Ali getting stung by a poisonous jellyfish.



EAR WE STAND As a special option when fighting Holyfield, use the analogue sticks to chew his ear.



CANARY WHOOOMPH! The classic boxers' breasts are captured.



GLOVE MEET FIST It helps that Lennox's fists are bigger than this guy's head.



CLAWS FOR THOUGHT Is wearing a skirt for boxing appropriate?

Full marks, too, for the improved artificial intelligence, enabling the line-up of famous fighters to display their own distinctive boxing styles and react to your punches in a realistic way. Lennox Lewis will jab repeatedly before landing one of his famous right-handers, Muhammad Ali will dance around the ring before delivering the knockout blow, and the others, well, we haven't heard of half of them. Felix Trinidad, Oscar De La Hoya, Bernard Hopkins, Fernando Vargas and Floyd Mayweather Jr have all been signed up by EA, which doesn't mean anything to us, but we can imagine fight fans will be mildly excited by the prospect.

MISMATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

More familiar is the list of all-time greats who've been recruited to *Knockout Kings 2002*, enabling players to create unlikely fixtures with such legendary fighters as Joe Frazier, Sugar Ray Leonard, Evander Holyfield and our very own Barry McGuigan. Laughing-stock lard-arse Butterbean



FRAZOR SHARP Joe Frazier gets back on the comeback trail by taking on the blubbery Butterbean.

/ WE'D HAVE LIKED PRINCE NAZ IN THERE, JUST TO SMACK HIM REPEATEDLY IN THE FACE /

makes an appearance too, adding a slight comedy element, especially when squared up against a lightweight. However, the absence of Tyson is something of a disappointment, the former heavyweight champ being tied into Codemasters' forthcoming *Mike Tyson Heavyweight Boxing* game. And we would have liked Prince Naz in there, not because we rate him as a fighter, just because we'd like to smack him repeatedly in the face.

WHEN BLOOD CLOTS GO BAD

Visually there's little to fault. The characters appear solid and suitably realistic (you'll spot the famous ones straight away); we particularly like the way they wince in pain when a decent blow is landed, and there are some nice graphical touches such as flexible ropes around the ring, and the hazy knockout effect as you lie semi-conscious on the canvas. If there's one criticism, it's that *Knockout Kings 2002* is hardly what you'd call spectacular, whereas rival contender *Ready 2 Rumble* most definitely is. The latter displays some of the finest graphics on PS2 – great character models, superb animation, and a liberal sprinkling of incandescent special effects guaranteed to seduce the 40 notes right out of your wallet. When directly compared, *Knockout Kings 2002* comes off the worse.

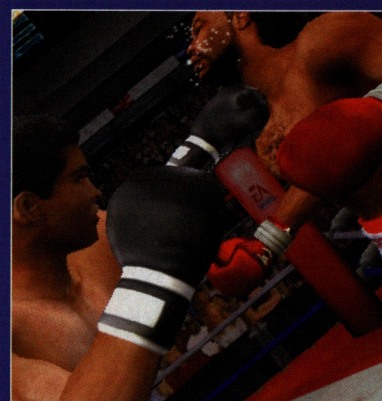
Minor longevity is added by a selection of game modes: Exhibition, Tournament and Career. The latter is perhaps the most interesting, allowing players to create a fighter from scratch and take him up through the ranks until eventually challenging for the title. But we'd be lying if we said we spent a great deal of time here, instead opting to duel it out in two-player mode. There's only so much satisfaction to be gleaned from beating the crap out of a computer opponent – it's better to pummel your mates into a humiliating defeat.

If nothing else, it helped fill the 1pm-2pm lunchtime slot when our copy of *Pro Evolution Soccer* mysteriously vanished, then just as mysteriously re-appeared in the games room a week later. For this, *Knockout Kings 2002*, we sincerely thank you. On balance, though, we'd have to say it's probably the best boxing game on PS2 without the words 'Rumble' or 'Ready' in the title, but overall, it comes a very close second place.

/ LEE NUTTER

HYPOTHETICAL FIST FIGHT

LEWIS VERSUS ALI: WHO'D WIN?



IF THE LEGENDARY MUHAMMAD ALI WAS TO TAKE ON REIGNING WORLD CHAMP LENNOX LEWIS, WHO'D EMERGE VICTORIOUS AND WHO'D BE DRIVEN HOME IN AN AMBULANCE? WE SET UP A SCRAP, WITH LEE NUTTER TAKING CONTROL OF LEWIS AND MIKEY FOLEY STRAPPING ON ALI'S FAMOUS GLOVES.

/ ROUND ONE: Lewis [Nutter] steams in with his far-reaching jab, but Ali [that man Foley] is too quick on his feet and leaves Lewis punching thin air. A duck, weave and sharp uppercut catches the Canadian unaware and has the current champ rocking on his heels. Not bad for a pensioner, suffering from a serious illness.

/ ROUND TWO: Lewis comes out determined to make up for his first round failure and lands a flurry of punches to Ali's head and upper body. Ali [Foley sipping water and not concentrating on the game] is clearly shaken, and does well to avoid the Lewis big right hand.

/ ROUND THREE: It's all Lewis now, and Ali [Foley complaining of a faulty controller] is fast running out of ideas. A brief exchange of punches late on is the best Ali can muster, but the Lewis jab is proving too strong for his opponent and – at this rate – it's only a matter of time...

/ ROUND FOUR: The old rope-a-dope isn't working for Ali and he's taking substantial punishment. Lewis unleashes a flurry of devastating uppercuts (Nutter's just found that move) and a crashing right-hander floors Ali. The boxing legend gets the full count, and it's all over.

/ RESULT: A true reflection of their comparative skills? We don't think so. Ali was unquestionably the better boxer, but the game feels weighted in Lewis's favour. Perhaps something to do with the fact he's still fit and fighting, and is the current world champion, while Ali's old and certainly past his best fighting days. Perhaps.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Plenty of famous fighters
- Realistic animation
- Some neat visual touches
- A lot speedier than last year

DOWNERS

- There's no Mike Tyson
- Uglier than *Ready 2 Rumble*
- Small amount of modes
- Similar to last year's game

GRAPHICS - Solid, detailed fighters, but not spectacular

7

SOUND - Decent commentary and lively hip hop

8

LIFESPAN - Plenty of longevity in multiplayer mode

8

OVERALL SCORE

The straight-faced boxing simulation doesn't quite match *Ready 2 Rumble* for sheer entertainment, but as a realistic interpretation of the noble art it simply can't be beaten.

7

DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES

BREAKS THE STONE-WRITTEN RULES BY CONTAINING A SPEAKING ANIMAL AND ALSO BEING A QUALITY PRODUCTION.

TYPE	ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	SURREAL SOFT
AGE	11+

SEE IT ON DVD

/ Dismemberment!
/ Hacking!
/ Slicing!
/ Really tight trousers!

IF LARA CROFT TAUGHT US

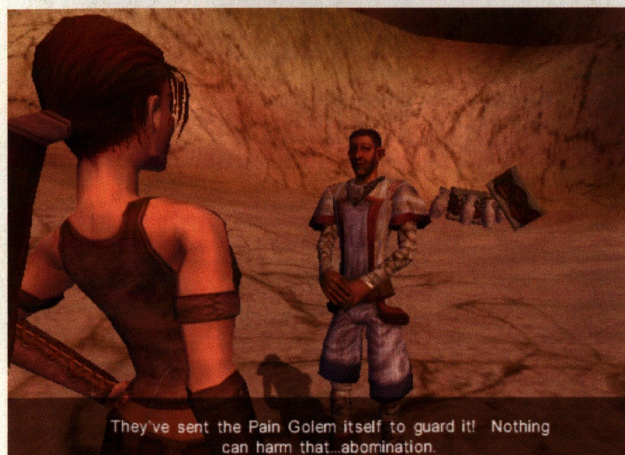
anything, it's that even an average game can be propelled into the billion dollar bracket if its lead character

flashes a bit of cleavage, wears big boots and has a nicely textured belly button. So here's a pretty female game star with long dark hair and flicky strands around her face, an arse that has obviously benefited from countless yoga sessions, with a cute English accent and a penchant for attacking monsters while spending quality time in dungeons. It could be *Tomb Raider: The Prehistoric Battle*, but it's not. It's *Drakan*, that woman's name is Rynn, and the whole game is rather reminiscent of *Tomb Raider* but with flying dragon-back sections and a slightly higher adventure element to it as well.

Maybe it's because our old memories of *Tomb Raider* are based on the blocky, glitchy, angular



IT'S A BIT LIKE... Jason and his Argonauts should sue.



They've sent the Pain Golem itself to guard it! Nothing can harm that abomination.

WORK IT, BABY Thrusting your tits at them is a last resort tactic. But one that so often works.

PSone games that *Drakan* seems all the more of a delight to look at and play. The scenery is curvaceous and colourful, with none of the angular hills and smudgy detail that often transforms 3D worlds into a gaming hell. Stonework is not just a sheet of brick-design wallpaper laid over a concrete slab, it's possible to see the raised sections and grooves between each perfect brick. Convincing cobwebs fill untouched corners, heat haze from fires turns your view convincingly blurry, hills and mountains smoothly fade into sight through the misty distance – *Drakan* looks consistently attractive.



FLY LIKE AN EAGLE Flying missions look rather pretty.

Even so, for the most part, it plays identically to the norm. You smash barrels and open chests for items, items which are then equipped to your character as you see fit. Shops sell new gear – blacksmiths for weapons, dodgy chemical dealers for magic and health – with your usual conversations with villagers filling you in, should background information be your thing.

DRAKANIAN RULING

And there's much talking to be done, with a gigantic and multi-plotted storyline that tests mental sharpness to its very limits. There's one core



YEAH, BYE The electro-monsters react badly to swords – they die.



YOU DRAKAN THE PISS? They look much better after a few pints.



LEAVING TIME This is a local cave, for local monsters.

/ HAPPILY, DRAKAN CONTAINS MANY COOL LITTLE IDEAS ALL OF ITS OWN /

narrative, but, along the way, Rynn and her talking dragon encounter many other people, seemingly all of whom have their own little missions for you to busy yourself with.

Happily, *Drakan* contains many cool little ideas all of its own. Best of all is the 'locking' combat system that helps massively when coming under attack. Hold down R2 to highlight the nearest enemy – from then on your attacks are directed towards that particular troll/man/spider, regardless of your movements. So it's now possible to run around attacking while simultaneously avoiding being hit yourself, plus it works with all the weapons. You feel more in control, you don't die needlessly, and you end up liking the game more as a result. Good work, design people.

Drakan's control is good all round, avoiding the side-stepping and perfect-positioning that many of



SHOO! SHOO! SHOOOOO! Perhaps try reasoning with it?



They will if you don't get up and fight them. What's going on here, anyway? Do you know what's causing these storms?

HERE, BOY! DIN DINS! Pets of the future: house training crucial to avoid major steam cleaning bills.

these games require. Well, that *Tomb Raider* requires. After the initial horror of visiting the option screen and seeing that every button on the pad is used, *Drakan* soon becomes a relaxing and easy going experience. Your R1 button cycles through any items you chose, avoiding painful visits to equipping screens altogether, with the square button and combinations of D-pad directions opening up your swordsmanship. It's easy and keeps the action flowing.

NEW AND GENUINELY IMPROVED

Another thing we like is this: each time you visit a location it's automatically added to your map screen, therefore never leaving you wondering how to get back to the blacksmith's to sell the gold you've just prised out of a freshly slain pixie's dying hands. On the whole the game and its options are easier to navigate, less frustrating and just generally more user friendly than most other offerings of this ilk. And you may even save your progress at any point, wherever you are (which is perhaps why it sucks up a huge 1.5MB chunk of your memory card).

The on-dragon flying sections are a great addition too, with your flying monster having two separate fiery attacks and entire missions for the both of you to tackle together. In fact, there's not much wrong with it at all, save for a slightly over-complex story and a water effect that looks more like a duvet than an area of liquid. It's good, and just like having *Tomb Raider* on PS2. Until we do have *Tomb Raider* on PS2 this'll more than suffice.

/ GARY CUTLACK

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Beautiful surroundings
- Innovative, clever controls
- Many missions and tasks
- Good dragon-flying bits

DOWNERS

- There's a lot of storytelling
- Contains a talking dragon
- Disappointing water effects
- Rather crap title

GRAPHICS - Undulating landscapes, detailed houses

8

SOUND - Loads of dialogue and a chatty heroine

7

LIFESPAN - Big, plenty of sub-missions, quite tough

8

OVERALL SCORE

Smooth and polished, *Drakan* isn't just a cheap copy of *Tomb Raider* – it improves on it with better controls, prettier looks and a greater emphasis on action rather than puzzles.

8

GRUESOME DETAILS!

THE THINGS YOU SEE THESE DAYS...

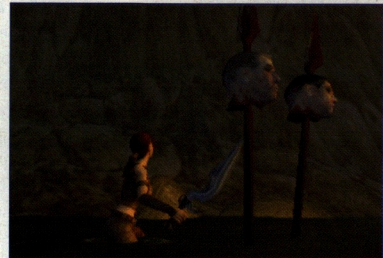
// CANNIBALISM!

CAULDRON-A-SOUP Unless the dead just like their baths particularly warm and lightly seasoned.



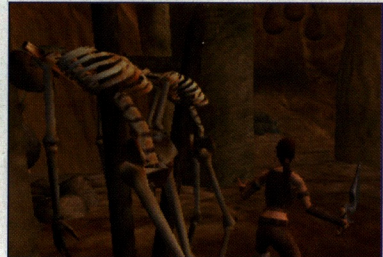
// HEADS ON STICKS!

IT WASN'T ME The rotting heads are just for show. You don't have to do any disembowling yourself.



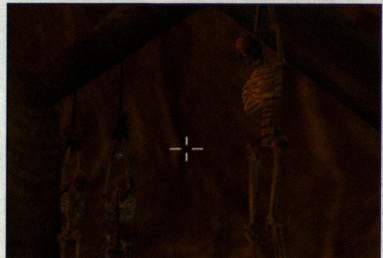
// BODIES ON SPIKES!

HIPS FACING NORTH? Bleached skeletons generate negative feng shui. Especially for those two guys.



// DANGLING DEAD!

TRUSSED IN ME When Innocent Bondage Games Go Wrong. It's on Sky One next Wednesday.



// HOOKED UP HOMBRES!

GOD'S FISHING That's exactly the kind of thing that gives video games a bad reputation.



PETER PAN ADVENTURES IN NEVER LAND

PETER'S MAGIC POWERS TURN A MASSIVELY UNADVENTUROUS GAME INTO ADVENTURES, JUST BY WRITING IT ON THE BOX!

TYPE	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	DISNEY INT.
AGE	3+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Small boy in green tights / Its not gay you know / Or even camp	

WHAT'S IN A NAME? WELL, IT'S

the whole reason for either adding this to your collection or leaving the shop in as calm a fashion as possible

before the terrible voices-made-me-do-it mind itch becomes overpowering, and you simply must cleanse the area with phosphorous grenades and secondary air strikes. Unsurprisingly, the weirdly ungrammatical *Peter Pan Adventures in Never Land* is aimed at children, and everything that people old enough to control their bowels might find disappointing will thus become irrelevant.

Does little Timmy/Tammy like Peter Pan? If the answer is yes, they'll *probably* like this, at least for a while. It may even keep them quiet, but then so will a couple of swigs of Calpol.

So, what's wrong with it? Certainly not the graphics, which are really rather attractive, bearing a crisp solidity under those bright colours that puts many earlier releases to shame. It moves fairly smoothly too, although it's no stranger to Mr Slowdown even when there's little occurring on screen. And while the character models themselves are fine, if a little basic, to adult eyes

they look rather smug, with Pan, Peter being the chief offender.

The premise behind your adventures, if you're interested, has something to do with monsieur Pan losing his ability to fly and... oh, you're not interested. Essentially you must wander through the levels, collecting pixie dust jars, prettily reflective bubbles, treasure and maps. Your opposition? Pirates, crabs, snakes, swarms of bees and everything else you'd expect to find on a desert island. Apart from one depressed man with three records he only chose because they made him look cultured, and an unused gramophone.

And parents, don't worry – there's no violence. Despite Peter's propensity for stabbing all he meets, there's no blood, and vanquished enemies don't die. Instead it's very obvious they've been 'knocked out'. Sadly, there's no real interest or challenge, either. The levels are the very definition of linear, and despite the occasional platform-style hummock, heading upwards will only see you disappear off the screen. Odd, then, that there are 'secret' things to collect on some of the taller hills to the sides, where the only challenge is controlling your boy in this new Peter Pan Ankle Adventure.

There's little in the way of variation, either, despite the inclusion of checkpoint-based flying levels. Pretty much the only surprises come when you fall down one of the occasionally well-camouflaged holes and die. Or whatever the child-friendly explanation is – if only we really could kill Peter Pan, and then maybe, like some weird kind of voodoo, we'd never have to listen to another Cliff Richard Christmas single again. And never play this again either. Stranger things have happened.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS



HAI "No one expects the Spanish Inquisition!"



DODGY PATHOLOGY Stabbings cause bloodless knockouts.



CROSS EYED BITCH BOY He always gave us the creeps.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Looks pretty
- As non-violent as you'll get
- Easy for the very young
- Peter Pan is total niceness

DOWNERS

- Incredibly linear
- Very repetitive
- Mostly boring
- Peter Pan is so very nice

GRAPHICS - Surprisingly attractive

7

SOUND - Grating for the over fives

5

LIFESPAN - Give 'em some Lego and they'll be off

5

OVERALL SCORE

After so many deeply shoddy licenced games spawned 'for children', *Peter Pan* at least looks the part. The very young will probably even enjoy it, but most will get bored very quickly.

5

MAIMED HORSE'S EYE VIEW
There's plenty of close up drama.



A LONG, LONG TIME AGO The story is strong with this one.



WU TANG DYNASTY CLAN Impressive, but beyond your control.

KESSEN 2

WHAT'S GOT FOUR LEGS AND A HEAD? A HORSE. IT'S NOT A JOKE, WE JUST COULDN'T THINK OF IT FOR A MINUTE.

TYPE	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	THQ
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	KOEI
AGE	11+

OF COURSE, WE'RE A LOT MORE

understanding of animal rights these days, and would never go to war on a horse. Maybe a genetically modified

monkey that enlisted of its own will, or via camera from a smart bomb bulging with uranium and quotations from Friedrich Nietzsche ("Faith is not wanting to know what is true..."), or a bicycle, but not a horse. Back in the day, however, when all they had was small underground walls, shards of pottery and the occasional ornate brooch to play with, horses were an intrinsic part of ceremonially stabbing thousands of frightened men to death in large fields. And even if you cut one of its legs off, everybody's horse was still exactly one horsepower, so everything was fair.

Kessen 2 harks back to that noble lost time. And while the names of many of the protagonists are confusingly realistic sounding to Western ears, and the emphasis is on big, credible battles, the sense of realism isn't ever allowed to get in the way. Not if the flying woman conjuring rock showers and deadly fissures out of nothing is anything to go by. Yes, magic plays its part, and it certainly adds a little fizz to the proceedings that can otherwise seem rather like several hundred people doing modern dance.

It's possible to view the battles from above (though it looks like an ant colony), or to zoom in on your chosen commander and steer them yourself. Close up control is rather vague, however, and the sheer number of combatants makes anything but general generalling awkward. Your armies are also controllable from the map screen, which gives a useful overview of the terrain and the attack formations of the enemy. To further simplify things, bowmen and foot soldiers move as fast as the cavalry, meaning they must all be one horsepower too. Those were truly amazing times.



CALAMITY The spells are as impressive visually as they are tactically – it's time to lash out. Lash!



HELPFUL "Past the injured, right at the dead, first tent on the left."

The cut-scenes may go on a bit on occasion, but they're extremely impressive to watch. It's wise to pay attention to them if you can, and not just for the cheesy breast jokes and massively impressive character models. Your co-combatants frequently present various strategies for your consideration, and if you don't listen you won't know what you're choosing. There's also the opportunity between fights to, say, train up your troops, intercept the opposition's supplies or do mercenary work in exchange for goodwill. All these things affect your armies' skill and morale – and low morale means defeat. Although the actual level of interaction is perhaps too small (those one-on-one fights are pure video, for instance), *Kessen 2* is fun: slow paced, slightly awkward, but fun. If you're after something deep (but not too deep) and already have *Age of Empires 2*, it's certainly worth a look.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Very impressive characters
- Hundreds of combatants
- Slow, thoughtful pace
- Well judged learning curve

DOWNERS

- Rather too many cut-scenes
- Interaction limited
- Some rather vague controls
- Can be confusing

GRAPHICS

- Great cut-scenes, great breasts. And beards

7

SOUND

- Rather lame voices, but some humour

6

LIFESPAN

- You can always fight a better fight

7

OVERALL SCORE

If you fancy something a little more tactical than usual, take some time with this. Make sure you try *Age of Empires 2* first, though, and if it's immediate thrills you want, stay away.

6



PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2

CARTOON DOG RAPS ALONG TO SONGS ABOUT FOOD, BEING SMALL, AND LIFE. HEY, IT BEATS LISTENING TO S CLUB 7.

TYPE	PRESS-ALONG
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	NANAON-SHA
AGE	3+

LIKE GIVING A CHILD A DRUM FOR Christmas, you may regret buying *Parappa the Rapper 2* after a while. Once you've spent several sleepless nights with rap lyrics pertaining to the burger cooking process going through your mind, you may indeed wish you'd never spent £40 on a product seemingly designed with the sole intention of taking over your mind. It may drive you crazy, but it may also make you giggle like a schoolgirl experimenting with cider for the very first time. Because *Parappa the Rapper 2* is a genuinely



THE WAY GAMES WERE Bizarre bonus battle on 2D tennis court.



21 BURGERS TO GO Your first rap encounter! Flip the burgers, chop, toast and fry. In time to music.

enjoyable experience that will make your life seem happier and fill your mind with incoherent, half-remembered song lyrics. Like drinking cider.

Your first gameplay moments sum up the whole thing. Parappa pops off to get himself some food – a Beard Burger, specifically – only to discover that the burger house has been taken over by noodles. Noodles just won't satisfy this dog's craving for meat, so you pop into the kitchen and proceed to be given a cooking lesson, which boils down to you pressing buttons in time to words. These words being "Buns!", "Patties!", "Toast!" and other key elements of the cooking process. Oh, and it all happens to music. Rap music. With words and everything. It's like nothing we've seen before.

PARAPARE YOURSELF

You have to be ready for an all-out comedy assault. Fat women falling into fountains on *You've Been Framed* are nothing to *Parappa 2*'s antics, with

"Noodlization" turning all food (and hair) in the town to noodles. A chain of events is set in motion, taking in miniaturisation, joining the army, romantic karate, battling noodle-hair in a barbershop and generally facing more and more outlandish musical foodstuffs as the game unfolds through its eight fairly short little chapters.

Audio quality is unbeatable, with each character sounding unique and professional. The Guru Ant raps like Chef from *South Park*, coming on slightly Barry White as he vocalises about "getting big" and the merits of living life at the size of an ant. Chop Chop Master Onion (how he must've suffered at school) raps sexy kung-fu in a Japanese accent. It's like this all the way through, always sounding impressive. You're scored on the accuracy of your repeated pressing, with each button triggering a word or short phrase. Hit it on the nail and you're sorted, making the game sound a lot better to boot. It's simple, with even simpler pre-level training



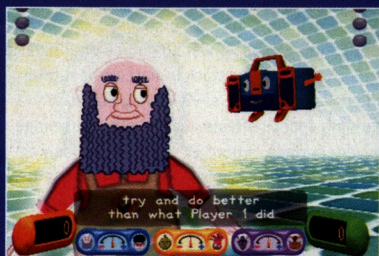
JUST THE TWO OF US, YOU AND I

TWO-PLAYER GAME SAVES PARAPPA 2 FROM OBLIVION

PARAPPA 2 HAS AN EXCELLENT TWO-PLAYER GAME. Against either a fellow human or a PS2-controlled character, each level may be played in its Battle mode. You bust a move, your opponent busts a move. Each of you then repeats it time and time again, trying to be better, more accurate and more rhythmically precise than the other. This throwdown then continues until one person may be declared the winner and therefore best at all games. Or, if you're playing against PlayStation2, until you get bored and throw your joypad down.



DOUBLE DUTCH Hip hop skipping with the skating army chick.



UNSHAVEN RAVER Cooking with the be-bearded chef.



FRENCH THE FRIES! Memorising burger-making techniques.



HIGH KARATE Romantic kung-fu with Chop Master Onion!



SMALLING IT Get big with the soulful little Guru Ant.

BAN NOODLIZATION! It has a story. It is an odd story.



/ YOU SPEND THE WHOLE TIME WATCHING A SMALL SCROLLING BAR WITH PS2 JOYPAD SYMBOLS ON IT /

matches and bonus rounds, both of which are pointless and quite dull. So we'll move on.

FUN IN A FLATPACK

It's stylish, no doubt about it. It's still flat cartoon characters in a 3D world as was the first *Parappa* on PSone, only now it's ten times as solid, twice as colourful and 33 percent less glitchy [all figures are approximate]. Regardless of statistics it looks ace. The characters have loads of expressions, and they all strike poses nicely and pull moves in accordance to their musical world. Even the loading screen bounces and scratches away, filling those tense pauses with noise and bright colours to stop you seeing your fat face in the black loading screen. That's the kind of attention to detail we like.

Our biggest problem lies with *how* you're expected to play it. Instead of focussing on the fantastic characters, you spend your whole time watching a small scrolling bar with PS2 joypad symbols whizzing along it. Give in to temptation and sneak a glance at the 95 percent of the screen where all the cool stuff is happening and you mess up. It's a game that looks better when someone else is playing – hardly a selling point.



OUT OF THIS WORLD Planet-sized ants and puppies rapping to each other. Mummy, we're scared.



BARBERSHOP QUARTET Trim the noodle-haired customers!

Because, while *Space Channel 5* lets you watch the screen and enjoy, *Parappa 2* forces you to concentrate on the symbols and ignore the gorgeous action. In any other month we would've liked *Parappa 2* more, but it simply isn't as much fun as *Ulala's* dancing game reviewed on page 78. It's also harder to play, with longer sequences and more button usage further lessening thrill impact. And you'll still complete it in a day, so it's definitely a prosecutable crime to describe the game as big. *Parappa 2* is cool, but *Space Channel 5* is cooler, features women instead of vegetables, and is set in space. In the future. Which is better.

/ GARY CUTLACK

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Funny script and story
- Very well animated
- Quality rapping
- Nice two-player game

DOWNERS

- Dull bonus and training bits
- Still a very short game
- Jokes soon wear thin
- The food makes you hungry

GRAPHICS

- Nice, but you're always staring at the symbols

7

SOUND

- Good tunes, enjoyable lyrics and ace rapping

8

LIFESPAN

- Short, easy, but saved by two-player action

7

OVERALL SCORE

Better than most rhythm-action games thanks to its jam-along two-player mode. But once the jokes have worn thin it's a simple and quite short experience. We prefer *Space Channel 5*.

7

SHADOWMAN 2ECOND COMING

EVER WISHED YOU WERE DEAD? IT'S NOT ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE, AND TV RECEPTION IN THE UNDERWORLD IS AWFUL.

TYPE	ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	APRIL
PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	ACCLAIM STUDIOS
AGE	15+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Shadowman transform before your eyes / The dark, dank, deadly depths of the deadside / Why your mum was right to make you eat your greens	

NEVER HEARD OF SHADOWMAN?

Never played the original? Good call. The first *Shadowman* game on PSone was appalling. Not because the developers were talentless buffoons; on the contrary the Dreamcast, PC and N64 versions were very commendable, but because PSone just wasn't up to it. Huge sprawling levels and gory blood spattered details got lost in the risible blurry smear that masqueraded as a piece of digital entertainment. Thank Sony then for progression.

Now that the distinctly more powerful PS2 is safely tucked away in over 20 million homes worldwide, the creators of one of the darkest games on PSone can finally realise their voodoo inspired vision of hell and earth.

First off, let's just call it *Shadowman 2* for now. It's all very well sticking numbers into words, but "Shadowman Two-econd Coming" just doesn't sound right. It sort of works for the movie *Se7en*, but only sort of, and the less said about the suggestively titled "Wip Three Out" the better.

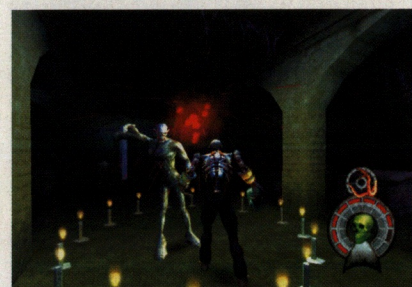


WINGED WARRIORS Use that claw to avoid a watery grave.

OK, so *Shadowman 2* it is, and what a pretty devil it is too. Maybe pretty isn't exactly the best word to describe hell and its bloodthirsty minions. What we're trying to say is that the hellish environments are superbly visualised. It's one of the most graphically polished games on PS2. Every weapon and voodoo attack initiates a beautiful, blinding kaleidoscope of vivid colours and sparkling special effects. Flaming fireballs singe the very surface of your TV screen and slashing attacks scythe through the freakish inhabitants of this world like a piercing flash of retina searing lightning. Yes, it looks great, but only when things are happening.

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

It's a shame then that the actual environments, silky as they are, display an unfortunate blandness in their features, or rather lack of them. New Orleans is depicted with a smattering of traditional yet strangely vacant buildings, but venture into the outskirts and you'll be met by a few trees, swampy pools of water and an



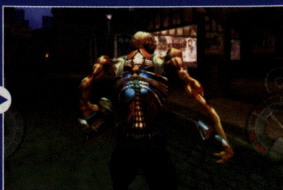
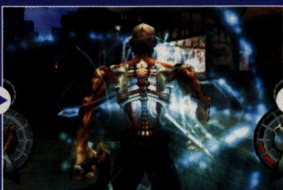
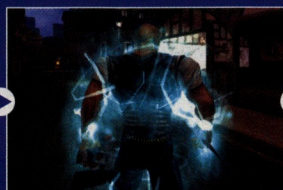
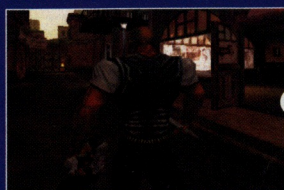
SMACK MAGIC See what happens when you don't pay the bills.

LOSE WEIGHT IN FIVE EASY STEPS! BEING DEAD HAS ITS ADVANTAGES, YOU JUST DON'T SMELL TOO GOOD.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THESE SCREENS, taken outside Mike LeRoI's decidedly unpopular New Orleans bar, when dusk turns to dark you transform from the burly LeRoI into the grotesque half-rotten carcass of Shadowman. Finding the watch later on

in the game enables you to instigate the metamorphosis whenever you choose. The transformation is not without its advantages. Shadowman is much more nimble, attacking more rapidly and thus being able to string together much

more lethal attack combos. The more attacks you string together in succession the harder the impact. Shadowman can also jump higher and further but he can't push boxes or take as many hits as the more muscular LeRoI.





THE CARNIVAL'S IN TOWN Don't dis the party glasses man.



FIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD He's quite hard for a skinny bloke.

abundance of tunnels and deep trenches. It's just about acceptable when depicting the inhospitable Bayous area, but it's a theme of blandness that permeates every one of the game's globe-spanning levels. Ireland is a featureless green expanse with rocky outcrops, typically incessant rain and, surprise, surprise, a host of claustrophobic tunnels and corridors. Russia swaps the green expanses for snowy white and yet another selection of dull trenches. They all feel incredibly empty and severely lacking in signs of life.

Another flaw with the level designs is that they're tremendously restrictive. You're constantly left with the feeling that you're being forced down a linear path. Obviously the developers have heeded the frustrated cries of gamers who spent hours getting lost in the first *Shadowman* game. That one was far too open and featured an abundance of back-tracking and helpless wandering in search of poorly placed items. In response to these criticisms, they've now made the game much easier to navigate, but as a consequence it's taken away a lot of the player's freedom in the process. Nevertheless, if we had to choose between the two we'd go for the linear option every time. It's not massively inhibiting, it's just that it removes a considerable amount of autonomy from the player's role.

It's a role that carries on from where the first game finished, not that you need to have played that to get into the sequel. While patient, persistent veterans of the original will be familiar with some of the cast, including the irritating 'Irish' leprechaun Jaunty, the whole premise is totally new and avoids any controversy by steering clear of the band of serial killers that featured in the first game. This time you've been tasked with stopping the fearsome Grigori gang, led by the New Orleans don Papa Morte, from resurrecting their demon leader Asmodeus.

SOUTHERN FRIED KICKIN'

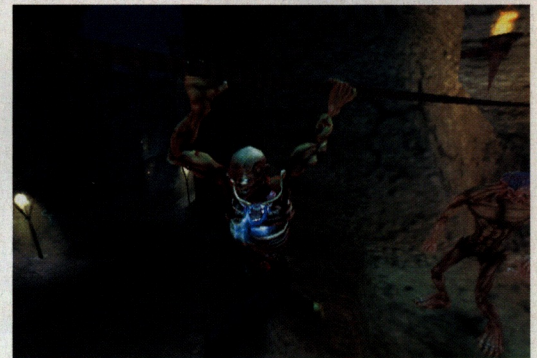
As is customary for tales based in the mysterious lands of New Orleans and Louisiana, black magic and voodoo play a significant role in proceedings. Your character, Mike LeRoi, can switch between the real world and the deadside, where he becomes the eponymous Shadowman. Both alter egos have advantages and disadvantages (see the panel, left) and whenever the day turns to night you automatically transform from a fully undecomposed man into your hideous skeletal alternative.



FLAMING HELL The inferno attack burns everyone, including you.



FAT CLUB Well at least that's one less arm to eat doughnuts with.



FAT CLUB PART TWO Try the assault course and see the flesh fall off.

Although many of the real world environments suffer from a touch of blandness, the same can't be said of the deadside levels. They're as murky and grotesque as the darkest recesses of your manic imagination. And the freakish inhabitants of these lands are as hideous as they are formidable. A massive selection of weapons is available to be unleashed upon these devilish masses, lavished with considerable imagination and graphical flair. As usual there's the predictable selection of automatics and cleaving clubbing instruments. However, it's the voodoo weapons and dark magic capabilities that really delight. Turning yourself into a flaming beacon of death and setting fire to all those around you is much more fun than administering a Desert Eagle blast to the temple. Not all of these toys can be gained from straightforward progression through the game. Some are only discovered with diligent searching and others are unlocked by solving the numerous puzzles in the game.

In a similar fashion to the *Tomb Raider* games, *Shadowman 2* combines third person combat with a selection of testing puzzles. The variety in each of the puzzles is admirable throughout and the professional voice acting is used to offer helpful hints along the way. Combat doesn't fair quite as well however, with your movement and two handed attacks feeling clumsy and awkward. Fortunately, once you get your hands on the meatier weapons, hand-to-hand combat is negated somewhat as you barbecue your adversaries with a few well-placed jets of flame instead – most helpful when you come up against the bosses that inhabit each environment. Blessed with some cunning artificial intelligence they each have their own style of

/ IT'S THE VODOO WEAPONS AND DARK MAGIC THAT REALLY DELIGHT /

attack, and present a formidable challenge even when you're fully tooled up. The witch from the Russia stage is particularly chilling, with the camera switching to take her viewpoint and stalking you through the woods like a Blair Witch killer, before striking fear into your veins and fire into your flesh.

Shadowman 2 is a stylishly produced adventure that entertains without ever delighting or instilling you with a desire to cherish any of its significant moments. Instead it feels almost workmanlike at times, doing everything we've come to expect from this type of game [puzzles, clumsy combat, deadly bosses] without ever excelling or innovating in any one area. Rather like *Project Eden* and *Soul Reaver 2*, it does everything you'd expect with an impressive visual flair, but a distinct lack of thrills or any emotional involvement.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- Gorgeous visual effects	- Combat feels clumsy	
- Massive range of weapons	- Some bland environments	
- Tighter level design	- Levels too linear in places	
- Amusing novelty animations	- Vague mission objectives	
GRAPHICS	- Stunning effects, sparse but crisp environments	8
SOUND	- Eerie background noises and good voice acting	7
LIFESPAN	- Over 20 hours of gameplay	7
OVERALL SCORE		
Spartan empty levels, formulaic and clumsy combat, and a distinct lack of anything remarkable are the downsides of this gorgeous looking game. Distracting, predictable fun.		

7

GODAI: ELEMENTAL FORCE

WE DON'T NEED ANOTHER HIRO, ALL WE WANT IS LIFE BEYOND... ER, ONIMUSHA AND MAXIMO FOR STARTERS.

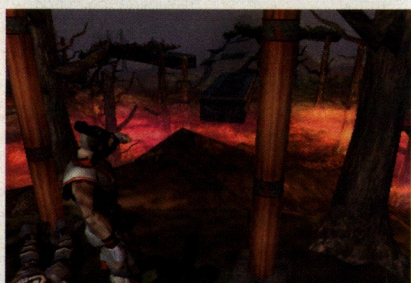


TYPE	FIGHTING
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	3DO
PRICE	£19.99
DEVELOPER	3DO
AGE	15+

AS LONG AS THERE ARE VIDEO games, there'll be ninjas. Meet Hiro, the latest eastern warrior with which you must save, oh, the world and everything in it. He might not be able to take on Samanosuke and Kaede from the fantastic – and rather similar – *Onimusha*, but he's surprisingly OK nonetheless. And that's about the full strength of praise we'd give this game. Surprisingly OK.

Initially, however, it tries quite hard to annoy you. The first thing you'll notice is the restricted view, which is really only useful during fights. Bearing in mind the sheer number of ructions you get involved in, it's not quite the problem it could otherwise have been, but it's still annoying on the rare occasions when you're free to roam the landscape. Then you must rely on memory to guide you, based on the fleeting occasions when the camera looks up and sweeps around to point out some new objective. Still, the game does tend to slow down a bit if the view gets too long, so perhaps it's for the best.

Due to the underpowered graphics, there's something else you'll have to deal with, too, and it's rather odd. On occasions your character seems to



FOR THE LOVE OF GODAI The Force is strong in this one.



flicker from place to place, as if every other frame was missing. The result is especially hard on the eye, and it can become difficult to keep track of exactly where you're going – it's rather like watching someone through a very weak strobe. This aside, the graphics aren't bad, with fetching water and motion blur effects and some amusing character animations. Nevertheless, there's a budget smell to it all that'll never wash off.

Perhaps *Godai*'s strongest aspect is its pace. The action is always super-fast, and while there are never many enemies on screen at once, there always seems to be somebody coming at you from somewhere. So despite the obvious similarities to the old PSone *Tomb Raider* games – the various learn-the-timing-and-dive-past puzzles – you never get bogged down. You don't waste time searching for items, either, as most things either

emerge from the bodies of slaughtered enemies or lurk within smashable crates and jars. So mostly you fight, swooping and even steering around the skies in fine *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*-style, ducking it out on the rooftops as well as the ground. There's also the obligatory *Matrix* influence, with a time-slowing roll that's actually – gasp! – useful. Being resurrected where you fell also keeps things rolling nicely, as does the predictable increase in your weapons and abilities. Even so, you'd have to be pretty bored to play this when *Onimusha*, *7 Blades* or [sidestepping the ninja thing] *Maximo* exist. Which, sadly for this, they do.

/STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Fast paced
- Attacks based on elements
- Hilariously inept voices
- Half price

DOWNERS

- Headache-inducing glitches
- Limited view
- Repetitive
- *Onimusha* et al are better

GRAPHICS - Occasionally pretty, occasionally shoddy

5

SOUND - Voices are a laugh riot

3

LIFESPAN - A fascination for ninjas really helps

4

OVERALL SCORE

Godai: Elemental Force isn't very good, but it isn't really that bad either. With more palatable graphics and a better view, this would be... well, *Maximo*. Only with ninjas. But it isn't.

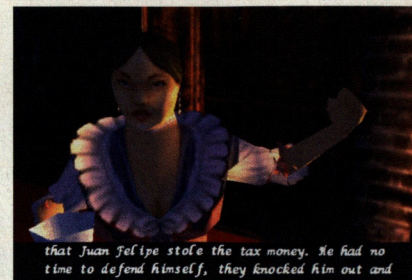
5



SPOT THE FIVE DIFFERENCES First correct entry wins a PSW mug.



MASKED SLASHER The cape is nice. We like the cape.



LOCAL LADIES Dusky, yet strangely unattractive women abound.



BLACK KNIGHT Pointless horse riding dramatic cut-scene!

THE SHADOW OF ZORRO

THE SHADOW OF ZORRO IS SADLY OBSCURING THE VIEW OF ALL THE NICE GAMES AVAILABLE ON PLAYSTATION2.

TYPE	ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	CRYO
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	IN UTERO
AGE	11+

THIS GAME GOT AN ABSOLUTE hammering from the PC magazines on its release a couple of months back – they hated it. And guess what,

it's about to get another, as the big machine's version of the game gets poorly slopped onto PS2 with nary a nod to console sensibilities.

You probably know the history. Don Diego, AKA Zorro, uses a sword to cut people up with as much confidence and ease as you or I would wield a spoon to eat breakfast cereal. It's second nature to him, sword-fighting is what he does. So it comes as a surprise to find that there's no sword action in

the game. Well, not directly. Upon bumping into a foe, a sequence of buttons appears on screen. You press these in order, as if playing a rhythm action game set in the year 1830.

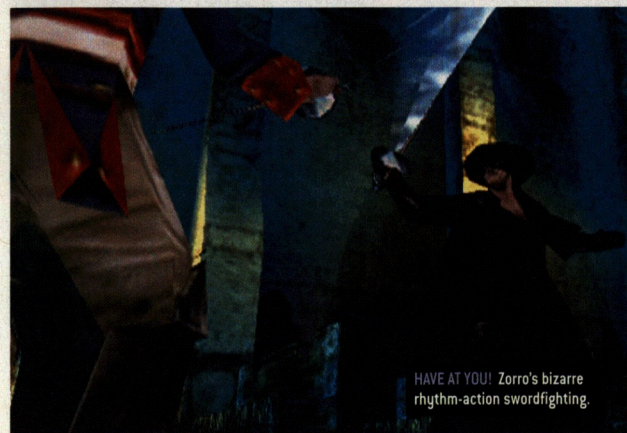
It just doesn't make sense! The mightiest swordsman the world has ever seen is neutered and presented in a routine and bland action game with no actual fighting. It does make the sword battles flow quite well and look impressive, but... it's not you. You didn't do anything, save press triangle, square, circle and cross in assorted orders. You feel you don't deserve to win.

The rest of your actions in this game are hindered by a poor camera system that often leaves you blind to danger. Play is done in your typical *Resident Evil* style, with a roving camera following you about your vigilante business. Problem is, it doesn't follow you particularly well, often careering off its axis and rotating through a wall. It's just a pain to play.

His swirly cape is the visual highlight, it's just a shame more processor power wasn't diverted away from fabrics and into the scenery, which intersects at harsh, glitchy right-angles. There's some nice detail, but there's a lot of darkness to peer through to find it. There's also a nice swooshing 'Z' when you defeat an enemy without taking a hit, but it's rather lazily superimposed on the screen instead of being slashed into their clothing. You know, like Zorro used to do. He's obviously grown out of it.

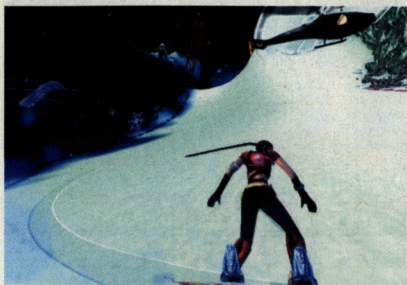
Elsewhere, loading times are long and frequent. We don't mind pauses if the game experience at the end is worth it, but when you're just being additionally bored on your way to an already boring level it becomes overpowering and too much to take. Anything else we don't like about this game? It's your typical find item A to activate thing B gameplay – surely Zorro shouldn't be running about trying to find keys to unlock doors? Enemies come back to life when re-entering a room much to your annoyance. Oh, and it's got a rubbish website, with an animated horse that gets stuck on the scenery. Is that being too picky?

/ GARY CUTLACK

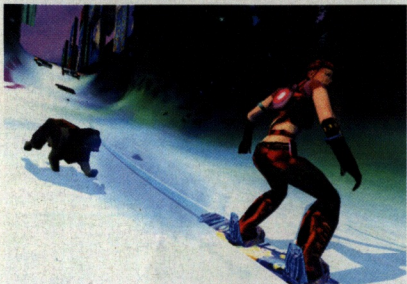


HAVE AT YOU! Zorro's bizarre rhythm-action swordfighting.

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- Box has a cool letter 'Z' on	- Poor camera angles	
- He has a moustache!	- Rubbish fighting system	
- He wears black!	- No sword-fighting yourself	
- He wears a cape!	- Over-complex storyline	
GRAPHICS	- Nice cape, shame about the everything else	3
SOUND	- Unremarkable. Consistently unremarkable too	4
LIFESPAN	- Awkward enough to last for ages	3
OVERALL SCORE		3
Think Zorro, think swords and glamour. You do not think of dull, tiresome action adventures with no actual sword-fighting to do yourself. It's wrong, almost at a genetic level.		



SLOPING RUN The slope police – are they in on the conspiracy?



BEARLY MAKING IT HOME There's a grizzly selection of natives.



WHAT COLD? PS2 woman snowboarder in scantily clad shocker!

DARK SUMMIT

A SNOWBOARDING GAME. WITH A STORY. HOW NOVEL.

TYPE	SNOWBOARD/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	THQ
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	RADICAL ENT.
AGE	3+

THE FLURRY OF SNOW-BASED

gaming continues this month with the disastrous *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix* on page 107 and this, the genre-blurring *Dark Summit*. While Mr Moseley's effort is the video game equivalent of waiting for a bus, fortunately THQ's *Dark Summit* fares considerably better in all respects.

It was never going to be easy releasing a snowboarding game to compete with the very might *SSX Tricky*, and it's to the developer's credit that THQ hasn't even bothered trying. Instead of a predictable and inferior clone, it's come up with something sufficiently different to demand serious consideration. Like, a plot. It turns out that harmful pollutants are being dumped on a popular ski resort, sections of which have been sealed off by security chief O' Leary, who presumably moved into the slope protection game following his sacking by Leeds United. Your character, Naya, is sent in to investigate, revealing a disturbing alien

connection and a possible military cover-up. It's formulaic *X-Files* stuff and never really grips, but it binds together the series of stunt-based challenges well and provides that little extra incentive to keep you playing.

Out on the slippery stuff it's hard not to be impressed. Each course is absolutely huge, there's very little glitching, and the challenges are sufficiently varied to ensure longevity is not a problem. You begin the game at the lowest section of the mountain, First Cut, where the aim is to complete the first set of nine missions to gain ski lift points that will deliver Naya to a different section of slope. All challenges must be completed before progression is allowed, while at the same time you need to pull off as many tricks as possible to gain experience points. Once you

manage to rack up a sufficient amount of experience points, new boards and designer outfits start coming your way.

SUMMIT'S WRONG HERE...

The problem is that it's not entirely clear where you're supposed to be heading – especially troublesome when the courses are as big as those featured in *Dark Summit*. Often it's difficult to locate the checkpoints where challenges are issued, so it becomes a test within itself to find them, while other times we found ourselves inadvertently skiing right past areas where a certain task had to be performed. The 'jump the snowplough' mission, for example, took a great deal of exploration and several restarts before we could complete it successfully. This leads to a



NICE MELONS A predictable pun, used for the 32nd time this year.



IT'S NUCLEAR TO ME The glowing radioactive barrels in the snow are a clue.



great deal of frustration at times and would appear to be easily remedied with a tweaking of the radar, which at present doesn't really appear to serve any particular function.

More worthy of the praise is the trick system, joyously simple to get to grips with thanks to the simplistic three-button arrangement. An assortment of grabs, flips and grinds are easily executed (each accompanied by a helpful sound cue which lets you know the move has been performed correctly) along with a sizeable array of special tricks. Only a handful of these are accessible from the start; others must be collected along the way, and are performed by a variety of button combinations. The tricks themselves range from the spectacular to the downright preposterous, and are an excellent way of showing off your PS2 to your mates.

Diversity comes in the form of multiplayer modes, which offer a number of different challenges for two players, but it's unlikely you'll be frequenting this particular area of the game too often. The recent *Shaun Palmer Pro Snowboarder* brought some genuine innovation to the genre with its brilliant multiplayer games, in particular the

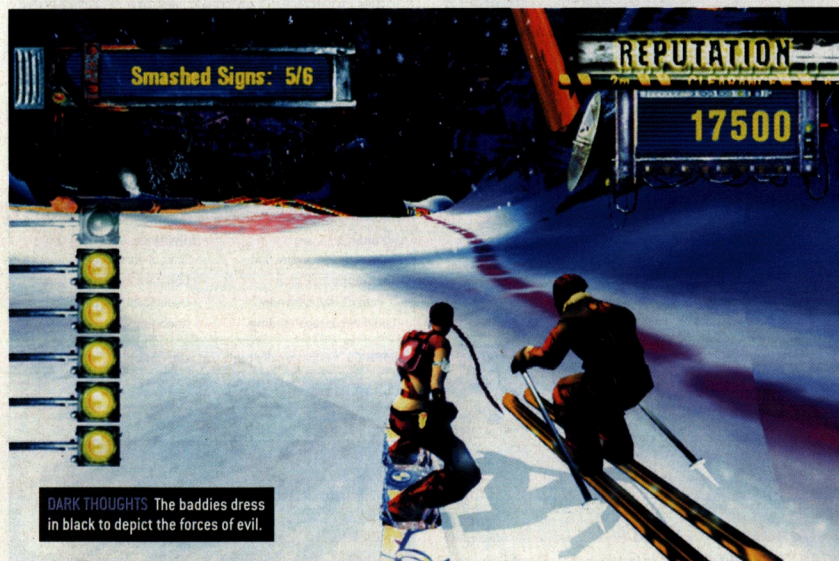
'Push' mode, which decreases the amount of screen space to the player performing worst. In comparison, the multiplayer element of *Dark Summit* comes across as something of an afterthought. Wrecking Ball and Race to the Bottom are almost entirely devoid of interest and challenge, while the requisite Half Pipe Battle offers nothing we haven't seen many times before.

VANDALISE SNOWMEN

Visually, *Dark Summit* is a tad hit and miss. Each of the courses are suitably huge and well varied in



THE SKI AT NIGHT It's always pretty bright for a dark summit.



DARK SUMMIT'S TOILET HUMOUR

YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE BEFORE YOU CAME OUT



DARK SUMMIT'S MISSION OBJECTIVES RANGE FROM the relatively straightforward to the downright preposterous and (slightly) pervy. Initial tasks include escaping the guards chasing you down the mountain, grinding down the security chief's picnic table and leaping over enormous machinery. So far, so good.

But things take an alarming turn for the worse when, approximately half an hour into the game, we're asked to steer a seemingly incontinent Naya to a nearby outhouse before trouser soiling takes place. This makes for a somewhat uncomfortable play experience, knowing that should your joystick skills not match up to the task, the heroine of the piece will be fully degraded in the worst possible manner. We were somewhat relieved to discover that no spillage is viewable should you fail to reach the toilet. Presumably the ultra-absorbent ski-suit soaks up most of the mess, but just the thought of what had occurred was sufficient to deter us from proceeding any further.

/ THE STORY IS FORMULAIC X-FILE STUFF AND NEVER REALLY GRIPS /

terms of design and colour palette (surprising for a snow-based game), and there's plenty of scope for stunts at regular intervals. The characters are animated realistically, the physics are well tuned, and the whole thing moves along at a commendable swiftness. The scenery destruction is a great idea too; hit a snowman and his torso will come rolling down the slopes, smash through the electrified fences and they'll come crashing down behind you. It's all good stuff, but not exactly what you'd call spectacular. Placed alongside the sublime *SSX Tricky* (the benchmark title), *Dark Summit* looks woefully inferior.

But we still had a lot of fun on the polluted slopes. It's not without its imperfections and we'd still much rather play *SSX Tricky*, but you can't fault the developer for attempting something different. And at a time when most games offer little more than an evening's entertainment, it's refreshing to note that *Dark Summit*'s stern challenge will last considerably longer.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- New ideas in stale genre
- Wide range of tricks
- Courses are huge
- Tidy looking graphics

DOWNERS

- Can seem aimless at times
- Occasional scenery pop-up
- Two-player mode is rubbish
- A measly four tracks

GRAPHICS - Fast, smooth, but lacking in sparkle

6

SOUND - Clichéd voices soon begin to irritate.

7

LIFESPAN - Dozens of missions provide long challenge

8

OVERALL SCORE

A commendable attempt to take the genre in a different direction by mixing in story elements, but ultimately not quite as enjoyable as pure snowboarding. A good effort, though.

6



NINETY-EIGHT, NINETY-NINE...
Holding your breath: bad idea.

DUNE

SET ON A WORLD THAT HOLDS THE SPICE OF LIFE, DUNE HAS A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS.

TYPE	ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
PUBLISHER	CRYO
PRICE	£39.99
DEVELOPER	WIDESCREEN GA
AGE	11+

THESE MUST BE THE SAME SANDS

Acclaim's *Paris Dakar Rally* went through – that was terrible as well. But while that was perhaps flawed from the off (the Dakar Rally is unquestionably exciting, but struggles to translate to the screen), the ideas behind *Dune* are more sound. It's a shame this didn't turn out better.

This is licensed from the TV mini-series rather than Frank Herbert's original book, or even David Lynch's epic 1984 flop of a film. Sadly this isn't quite what it seems – the license doesn't include any of the actors. But hey, check out that sand. That's officially licensed sand – the sand of Dune, otherwise known as Arrakis. This planet is the sole source of Essential Spice, the only substance that guarantees longevity, and so has unsurprisingly fallen into the grip of some unsavoury characters. You, playing as Paul, must battle the colossal Baron Harkonnen *et al* using a mixture of stealth, cunning, and big guns. Well, in theory, at least.

In reality your biggest foe is the camera. Even when the automatic camera-brain is switched on it's severely deficient, rarely showing you anything of use, such as where you want to go or who you're fighting – doubly annoying when just a few shots kill. You can turn it off and choose to do all the work yourself with the right analogue stick, but why a total lack of camera AI was considered a worthy option is beyond us, unless they realised how bad the game was at controlling it... and in that case, why didn't they make it better?

And if only they'd left us in control for the lengthy, useless, unskippable cut scenes we could

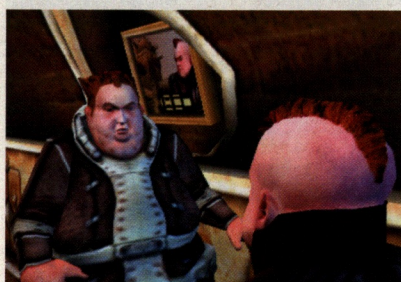
have looked away. Even ignoring the total absence of lip synching, the mangled oral stylings of the characters are quite disturbing – like giggling children wrenching the lines of 40 fishhooks attached to a dead man's face.

Occasionally, however, things look good. The worms in particular are an impressive sight, but no less dull a playing experience for it, as you merely need to run away while avoiding the soft sand. And that's only tough because you're running into the camera and can't see where you're going... Still, you won't see the worms very often, as much of the time is spent wandering through corridors in an allegedly *Metal Gear Solid*-style, although inviting comparisons with that astonishing game is tempting catastrophe. Suffice to say that all comparisons are redundant. Despite its promising sci-fi premise, *Dune* simply fails, both as a game and as a story, large swathes of which are missing. So it's more like *Paris Dakar* than *MGS2* – stranded up to its axles in sand before it even begins.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS



KILLING TIME The nail-filing sequence is a real belter.



GET BACK IN THE GOX Cut-scenes feature a cast of ventriloquists.



SDRAWKAB GNINNUR Due to the stupid camera angle, evading worms is like running backwards.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- It's not based on the film
- The worms look nice
- It doesn't involve snow
- Could encourage reading

DOWNERS

- Tons of slowdown
- Constant loading pauses
- Useless camera angles
- Annoying

GRAPHICS - Occasionally pretty, mostly not

4

SOUND - Voices but no lip synching

3

LIFESPAN - Only five missions, all irritating

2

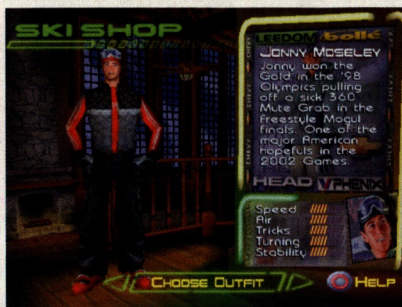
OVERALL SCORE

There's simply too much in the way of quality action adventures out there to recommend this. Even *Dune* fans should stay away – play *Tomb Raider* while squinting instead.

3



WOOAHH! Clock that speed: 48 actual miles per earth hour!



IS THAT LEGAL? "Jonny ... pulling off a sick 360 mute" Sick indeed.



THIS ONE'S FOR THE FANS Both of them. It's no wonder we've never heard of the bloke.

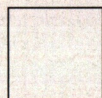


NOW THAT'S MAD Look, he's even got his skis crossed. That's just pure unadulterated insanity.

JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX

JONNY MOSELEY'S VERY OWN SKIING GAME:
BOX OF TRIX OR BAG OF SH*TE? GUESS.

TYPE	SKIING
PLAYERS	1
OUT	MARCH
PUBLISHER	3DO
PRICE	£29.99
DEVELOPER	3DO
AGE	3+



DON'T THINK OF THIS AS A REVIEW

so much as a firebombing. *JMMT* is without doubt one of the most inept, joyless, poorly created pieces of software we've ever seen, and that's saying something – we reviewed *Surfing H₂O* as well. As an insult it's almost personal. When we played it, *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix* drew crowds. Noisy crowds, making the kind of noises groups of lightly drunk people make when Channel 5 really gets into its stride with *When Stunts Go Bad IV: He Thought The Wire Was Attached*.

If a 16-year-old made this in sixth form, you'd be proud. You wouldn't play it, but you'd admire the fact it ran. Let's deal with a question we can answer, first of all: what is *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix*? It's *SSX*, only on skis and so far beneath bad it lurks on the abyssal plains beyond words. You creep 'down' apparently flat courses, staring in disbelief at your speedometer as the occasional ugly, unfathomably placed ramp or rail nears with all the speed of a mirage. You'll locate these things easily in the general tunnel of blurred, streaky

snow texture – they're the blocks that stand out as a completely different shade of white. Go up these things: press the same buttons you do in *SSX* to pull off tricks – bending your legs a bit, perhaps, and then bending them back. Next, marvel at the total lack of inertia or momentum, as your skier treacles his or her way off a 'big air' cliff and sinks, like a feather through syrup, to the floor below. Sinks, drips, *smears* at a totally constant, unrealistic rate that offers this much excitement: none at all.

After watching agog for a few minutes, Mikey asked "Is there a point to this?" Tough call. It gives the people who make the discs something to do, we suppose. Does that count? But look, the level design is worse than most children could achieve with a track editor. The voiceover man sounds as if he's been sedated against his will. They've spelt 'Lien' wrong. Playing is a double whammy of disappointment – the aching infinity before you reach the next ramp, the disbelieving sadness once you do. And then you notice your skis leave the same trail in concrete as they do in snow... our

hearts go out to all those involved. This is worse than having a girl you really fancy turn out to be the doctor performing corrective surgery on your stinking, abscessed testicle. *Jonny Moseley Mad Trix*. Why? We can't answer that.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- You've been warned	- The tracks are rubbish	
- And can avoid it	- It's very slow	
- It reflects brilliantly...	- It looks terrible	
- ... on the makers of SSX	- It's an appalling experience	
GRAPHICS	- Flat, blurry, blocky, risible	1
SOUND	- Painful and predictable	1
LIFESPAN	- Measured in nanoseconds	1
OVERALL SCORE		1
This is not why you bought your PS2. This isn't even why you'd buy a PSone. As in the 50s when the atom was split, we can only feel sorrow in a world where such horror exists.		

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SOLUTIONS

GAMES MADE EASIER. CHARACTERS UNLOCKED. WEAPONS ENHANCED. PILGRIM COSTUMES REVEALED.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A HOMOGENEOUS MIXTURE OF TWO or more substances, either solid, liquid, gaseous or any combination of the three: that's what a solution is. It could be Jack Daniels and Coke, cheese and onion (when melted in an omelette of course, otherwise they're just two separate entities of pressed milk curd and root vegetable), or it could be brine, the salty water that keeps our tinned hotdogs fresh, moist, and ready to be flipped into a finger roll for a convenient mechanically-recovered meat snack. Winolene and vinegar, cookies and cream, spit and polish, Torville and Dean... The list goes on.

You see, there are many solutions in life, but none as essential as those that tell you how to make your character's head bigger in a video game. That's why we're here, and why you're here too. Shall we begin?

/ MIKEY FOLEY SOLUTIONS EDITOR

JAMES BOND 007

110

■ Who needs Q when you've got an invincibility cheat?



AIRBLADE

111

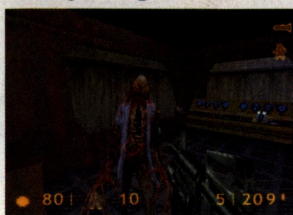
■ Who needs wheels when you've got an airblade?



HALFLIFE

112

■ Who needs moisturiser when you've got no skin?



BURNOUT

ACCESS FACE OFF OPTION

Complete Championship mode once to unlock Face Off 1 against the Roadster.

ACCESS ROADSTER

Defeat the Roadster in Face Off 1 to unlock it and Face Off 2 against another car.

ACCESS SALOON GT

Defeat the Saloon GT in Face Off 3.

ACCESS TOWTRUCK

Play in Championship mode until you unlock Face Off 2 in the special options screen. Defeat the Towtruck to unlock it.

ACCESS BUS

Defeat the bus in Face Off 4.

CRASH WITH HORN

Hold to use the horn while driving. When you crash, the horn will remain on.



CLOSE YOUR EYES Drive the wrong side for extra boost.

ACCESS END BONUS

Complete the game to unlock the Free Run mode (no vehicles on the road), Free Run Twin mode (two player Free Run), and Credits options.

INCREASE BOOST

Drive on the wrong side or centre of a double lane to keep increasing your boost.

FULL BONUS

Drive a perfect lap with no accidents.



CARVE-UP There goes your perfect lap full bonus.



LET'S OFFROAD Try sticking to the tarmac in these situations.



HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES That'll teach those truckers to burn our sheep.

JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

INVINCIBILITY

Pause the game, hold **L2** and **R2**, then push **○**, **△**, **□**, **▲**, **♥**, **○**, **○**.

UNLIMITED AMMO

Pause game, Press **×**, **×**, **×**, then **R2**, hold **R1** and press **○**.

UNLIMITED HEALTH

At the main menu, hold **R1** and **R2** and press **▲**, **♥**,

○, **○**, **♥**, **♥**, **♥**, **♥** and **○**. Begin the game and then press **Start**. Hold **♥**, **L2** and **R2**, and press **○**, **○**, **R2**, **○**, **L1**, **□**, **□** and **○**. If done correctly, you'll now have unlimited health in all levels.

UNLIMITED ROCKET LAUNCHERS

At the main menu, hold **L1**, **L2**, **R1** and **R2**, and press **▲**, **♥**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○** and **○**. Begin the game and then press **○**, **□**, **R1**, **□**, **▲**, **○**, **♥** and **○**. You'll now have unlimited rocket launchers in all levels.



GO STRAIGHT FOR THE EPIGLOTTIS Or the pancreas, or the gluteus maximus...

DARK SUMMIT

EXTRA POINTS

Pause the game and press **△**, **□**, **L1**, **○**, **R1**, **×**, **R1**, **×**. A sound cue will confirm the correct code has been entered. You will now have 9,100,000 lift points to access all areas except for Moon Gate. You will also have 9,100,000 equipment points to access all boards, accessories and special tricks.

ACCESS ALL BOARDERS

Pause the game and press **△**, **□**, **L1**, **○**, **R1**, **×**, **R1**, **△**. A sound cue will confirm the correct code has been entered.

COMPLETE ALL CHALLENGES

Pause the game and press **△**, **□**, **L1**, **○**, **R1**, **×**, **R1**, **○**. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. All challenges except for 43 (Race The Chief), 48 (Bomb #5), 49 (Alien Half Pipe), and 50 (Storm HQ) will be completed. You'll also have all Bomb Pieces, with the exception of #5.

UNLOCK ALIEN

Pause the game and press **△**, **□**, **L1**, **○**, **R1**, **×**, **R1**, **×**. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Challenges 43 (Race The Chief), 48 (Bomb #5), 49 (Alien Half Pipe), and 50 (Storm HQ) will be completed. You'll also have Bomb Piece #5.

SHOOT PROJECTILE

Press **Start** to pause the game, then press **□**, **○**, **△**, **R1**. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Press **R2** to shoot a barrel with a projectile.



ALIEN ANT FARM You can unlock an alien to make the game 2% more fun.



SUMMIT LIKE THAT Turn tricks, shoot your bolt, pull off wheelies, go down...



PINING FOR SOME REAL GAMEPLAY? Oh well, the cheats make it a bit better.

AIRBLADE

CHEAT MODE

Select Story mode, then press **▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, L1, L2, R2, R1** and **ⓧ** at the level selection screen. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. All levels, characters, and bonuses will be unlocked.

ACCESS JJ SAWYER

Complete the game with an "S" rank in all levels.

ACCESS NAOMI

Complete the Downtown level with a "B" rank.

ACCESS OSCAR

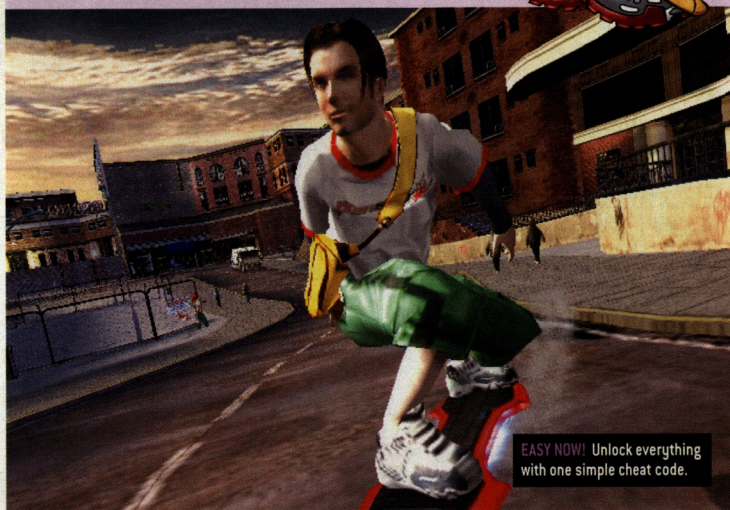
Complete the game with an "A" rank in all levels.

ACCESS THE INSIDER

Complete the Storage level with a "B" rank.

ACCESS STUNT ATTACK MODE

Complete the game in Story mode.



EASY NOW! Unlock everything with one simple cheat code.

MAX PAYNE

EIGHT PAIN KILLER PILLS

Press **START** to pause the game, then press **L1, L1, R2, R1, ▲, ○, ×, □**.

ALL WEAPONS AND FULL AMMO

Press **START** to pause the game, then press **L1, L2, R1, R2, ▲, ○, ×, □**.

UNLIMITED BULLET TIME

Press **START** to pause the game, then press **L1, L2, R1, R2, ▲, ×, ×, ▲**.

INFINITE AMMO

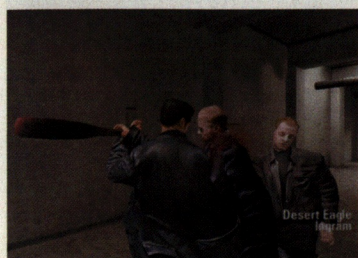
Press **START** to pause the game, then press **L1, L2, R1, R2, ▲, □, ×, ○**.

INVINCIBILITY

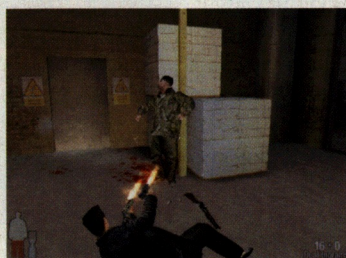
Press **START** to pause the game, then press **L1, L1, L2, L2, R1, R1, R2, R2**. The code may need entering again after saving.

LEVEL SELECT

Play through the game until you pass the subway level. Then press **START** to return to the main menu, then press **▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, ○**.



JOIN THE CLUB Now surely that's got to smart a bit.



PLEASED TO MEAT YOU Mr Payne 'cracks' another 'yolk'.

DROPSHIP

Select the Classified Files option from the main menu and enter these codes:

INVINCIBILITY

Enter TEAMBUDDIES as an unlock code.

BONUS LEVEL 1

Enter KREUZLER as an unlock code.

UNLIMITED AMMUNITION

Enter BLASTRADIUS as an unlock code.

BONUS LEVEL 2

Enter SHEARER as an unlock code.

LEVEL SELECT

Enter KINGSLEY as an unlock code.

BONUS LEVEL 3

Enter UBERDOOPER as an unlock code.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES

ACCESS ALL AIRCRAFT

Enter SHPONGLE as a name to unlock all aircraft and levels. The effects of the code will be disabled if the game is saved.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

ALL WEAPONS:

Press **START** when the game is in progress, then hold **L2** and press **□ (x3), L1, R1, R2, □ (x5)**.

TWISTED METAL BLACK

INVINCIBILITY

Set the control option to Classic. Hold **L1, R1, L2, R2** and quickly press **▲, ▼, ▲, ▼ (x2), ▲, ▼, ▲** when the game is in progress. The message 'Invulnerability On' will appear to confirm correct cheat input. Repeat the code to disable the effect.

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Crash Bandicoot 3	Hidden & Dangerous	Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage	
Crash Bash	Hogs of War	Spyro 3: Year of Dragon	
Crash Team Racing	In Cold Blood	Star Wars Jedi P Battles	
D Mirror BMX: Max Remix	ISS Pro Evolution	Star Wars: Phantom M.	
D. Nukem: L. of Babes	Italian Job	Syphon Filter	
D. Nukem: Time to Kill	James Bond: TWINE	Syphon Filter 2	
Die Hard Trilogy	Legacy of Kain	Syphon Filter 3	
Digimon World	LMA Manager 2001	The Italian Job	
Dino Crisis	LMA Manager 2002	The World is Not Enough	
Disc World 2	Martian Gothic	Theme Park World	
Discworld Noir	Mat Hoffman's BMX	Tomb Raider	
Disney's Dinosaur	Medal of Honor Underg.	Tomb Raider 2	
Doom	MediEvil	Tomb Raider 3	
	MediEvil 2	Tomb Raider 4	
	Men in Black	Tomb Raider 5	



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THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

EXTRA MONEY

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **□, □, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

EXTRA CAMERA VIEWS

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **□, □, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

OVERHEAD VIEW

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **○, ○, ○, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

NIGHT TIME

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **×, ×, ×, ×** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

FLAT CHARACTERS

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **○, ○, ○, ○** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. All the characters (except the one you selected) will be flat.

SHOW COLLISION LINES

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, ×, ×** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

RED SOAPBOX CAR

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

PLAY AS SMITHERS!

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

DRIVE NUCLEAR BUS

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, ×** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

STOP TIME

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **○, △, □, ×** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Press **△** to start, stop, and reset the timer.

PLAY IN SLOW MOTION

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **×, ○, △, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry.

HALLOWEEN MODE

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, ×** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Alternately, set the system date to October 31 to unlock Bart in a Frankenstein costume.

NEW YEAR'S DAY MODE

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Alternately, set the system date to January 1 to unlock Krusty in a tuxedo.

THANKSGIVING MODE

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, □** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Alternately, set the system date to the third Thursday in November to unlock Marge in a pilgrim dress.

CHRISTMAS MODE

Hold **LT** and **RT** and press **△, △, □, △** at the options menu. A sound cue will confirm correct code entry. Alternately, set the system date to December 25 to unlock Apu in a Santa costume.

HALF-LIFE

INVINCIBILITY

At the cheat screen press: **□, □, △, △, □, □, ×**

UNLIMITED AMMUNITION

At the cheat screen press: **□, ×, □, ○, □, ×, □, ○**

PLAY IN SLOW MOTION

At the cheat screen press: **□, □, △, △, □, □, △**

INVISIBILITY

At the cheat screen press: **□, □, □, ○, □, □, □, ○**

ALIEN MODE

At the cheat screen press: **□, △, □, △, □, △, △**

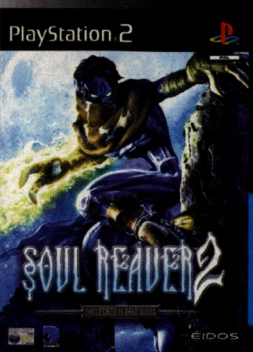
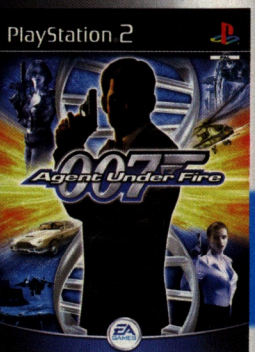
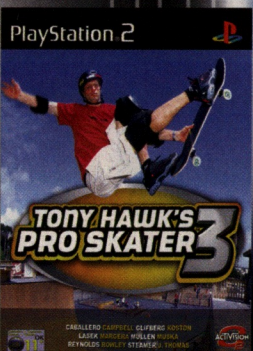
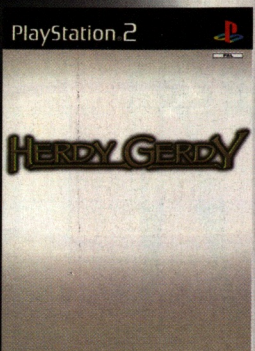
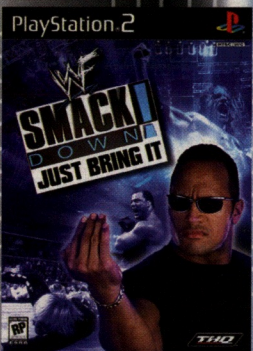
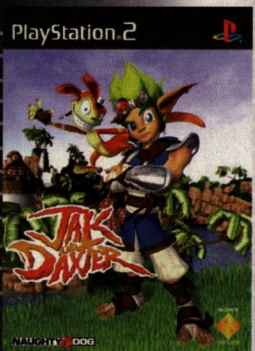
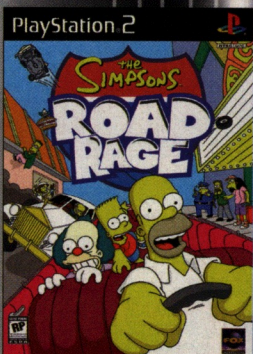
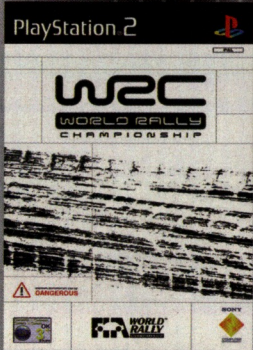
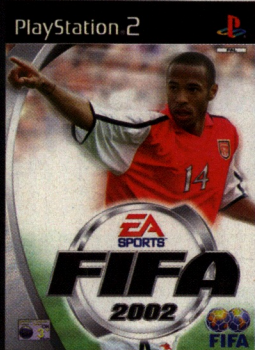
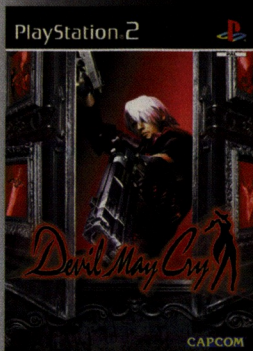
ALTERNATIVE ALIEN MODE

At the cheat screen press: **□, △, □, ×, □, △, □, ×**

BONUS LEVEL 3

Select the Classified Files option at the main menu. Enter UBERDOOPER as an unlock code.





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DVD

116

■ "Voulez vous regarder un DVD avec moi, ce soir?" Nicole joins Ewan in the glorious *Moulin Rouge*.

BROWSER

UPGRADE

121

■ Browse the internet from absolutely anywhere in the world you like. Or Colchester.



BROWSER

CHARTS

122

■ Not quite as sexy as *Top of the Pops*, but with a lot more lists of games and DVDs.



BROWSER

UNDERCOVER

124

■ PSW presents 44 reasons to stick with PlayStation2. Reason number 23: Bill Gates.



BROWSER

DISTRACTIONS

126

■ Win a snowboard and a nice cosy jacket courtesy of *Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder*.

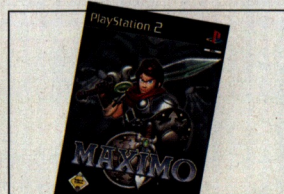


BROWSER

ESSENTIAL 50

128

■ All the best PS2 games arranged into neat rows. You should experience them all.



MOULIN ROUGE [2001]



"MUSICALS ARE ALIVE, WITH THE SOUND OF INTEREST." YEP, WARBLING AND PRANCING PICS ARE HIP AGAIN, AND IT'S ALL DOWN TO ONE MOVIE.

■ **Starring:** Ewan McGregor
 ■ **Director:** Baz Luhrmann
 ■ **Certificate:** 12
 ■ **Type:** Musical comedy/drama
 ■ **Distributor:** 20th Century Fox
 ■ **Price:** £17.99



The pint swilling, post footy rucking, tattoo-scarred-prick-brains that speckle our land, as if some anthropological potty had been accidentally upended, won't take kindly to this. Doubtless their critical reading of this would err towards the "fookin' gay!" Still, their loss. The rest of us

properly developed, intelligent, open-minded fans of creativity and inspiration will find much in *Moulin Rouge* to illuminate our oft-dour daily drudgery. It's a picture of such life-affirming, heart-stirring beauty as to demand of this viewer an ear-to-ear grin from outset to credit roll.

McGregor is a talented young writer with a gift for poetry. Defying his father, he moves to the bohemian underworld of Montmartre, Paris, where his life becomes centred around the Moulin Rouge, a nocturnal world of sex, drugs and risqué dancing. While enjoying the heady pleasures, he falls for Nicole

Kidman's Satine, the most beautiful courtesan in Paris and star of the Moulin Rouge. They embark on a romance, which is sadly doomed.

Rarely will you be witness to a more lush, sumptuous and rich spectacle. Gregarious deployment of vivid tincture; moorish plum velvets, heavy clarets, golds alive with phosphorescence. Add those songs: all contemporary, 20th century and populist (Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* etc.) and the blend is every bit as varied as the visuals are florid.

But the real stars of the picture are the actual stars. McGregor and Kidman bowl about the place

gurning, grimacing and grinning. And quite simply, it makes for riveting cinema. While Kidman is a wonderful image to behold in this mesmerising jaunt, for PSW it's McGregor's hugely amusing smiley dancey routine that is most entertaining. He's clearly having the time of his life, as is the viewer.

■■■■■■■■■■■ 8

EXTRAS Theatrical trailer, writing commentary, eight behind-the-scenes sections, *The Making of Moulin Rouge*, four re-cut dance sequences, two music videos, live MTV performance, plus more...

■■■■■■■■■■■ 9

COUNTER CLOCK



0.49.39 Smiley culture

Look, there's just something about McGregor, alright? It's not that PSW is in anyway, you know... But the sight of the man who was Renton in *Trainspotting*, Alex in *Shallow Grave*, and Obi-Wan, dancing and smiling like a loon is too good for words. This rooftop moment when he sings to an equally grin-faced Kidman is sublime.

EXTRAS, EXTRAS!



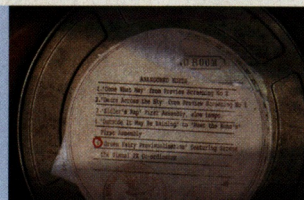
MAKING OF

A huge selection of behind-the-camera chat and moments showing how scenes were staged, lit and played out. Any fan of the picture is going to revel in the film's astonishing level of detail.



THE STARS

McGregor and Kidman chat about their roles, how they went about learning to dance and sing, and the relationship between them, something that was the subject of much media scrutiny upon release.



CUTTING ROOM

Bits and bobs that never made it to final cut. Looking at some of them, you wonder why as there are some wonderful moments here. Includes FX work that was evidently just a waste of time.

MARATHON MAN (1976)



■ **Starring:** Dustin Hoffman
 ■ **Director:** John Schlesinger
 ■ **Certificate:** 18
 ■ **Type:** Thriller
 ■ **Distributor:** Paramount
 ■ **Price:** £14.99



A wonderfully authentic adult 70s thriller. Complex, dense with confabulation, yet equally happy to pause for a ponder, *Marathon Man* tells the tale of Babe (Hoffman), a mild mannered student and jogging fanatic who winds up embroiled in a diamond smuggling plot. But one orchestrated by Dr Szell, a former SS dentist, known as the 'White

Angel' of Auschwitz, and thus a very dangerous and brutal environment. Roy Scheider pops up as Doc, a 'Division' agent and Babe's brother. The resultant turny-twisty tale will leave some viewers as perplexed as poor Babe. However, it remains a powerful, menacing tale, driven along by Michael Small's murderously impoverished synthesised score. A film buff's classic.

EXTRAS Rehearsal footage, 'Remembering *Marathon Man*', cast and crew interviews, 'The Magic of Hollywood is the Magic of People' featurette, trailer.

SPACED SERIES 2 (2001)



■ **Starring:** Jessica Stephenson
 ■ **Director:** Various
 ■ **Certificate:** 12
 ■ **Type:** Comedy
 ■ **Distributor:** Channel 4
 ■ **Price:** £14.99



Oh the references, oh, the joy. This is a 20-something's nirvana, as Tim (Simon Pegg) and Daisy (Stevenson) return for another seven comedic tele-casts that plunder the zeitgeist, fetishising the insignificant and making it funny. What's to know? Well they live in a flat and they've got some kooky (ugh!) associates. So far, so

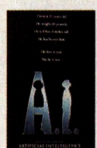
Friends. But where *Spaced* triumphs is in its unashamed surrealism, insane dream sequences, flashbacks and heavy dose of cultural referencing. *PSW*'s two faves from series one are the "perfect for a child" conversational reference to *The Shining*, and the stupidly cool *Don't Look Now* girl-in-red-mac in the background. See how many you can spot in series two. See, the English can do comedy after all.

EXTRAS Character biographies (written for the DVD by Pegg and Stephenson), "Homage-o-meter", cast/director commentary.

A.I. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (2001)



■ **Starring:** Haley Joel Osment
 ■ **Director:** Steven Spielberg
 ■ **Certificate:** 12
 ■ **Type:** Sci-fi
 ■ **Distributor:** Warner Brothers
 ■ **Price:** £16.99



AI had a turbulent welcome. The original, and sadly final, brain-child of the great Stanley Kubrick, the reins were subsequently taken up by Steven Spielberg, who used the huge amount of research and planning Kubrick had amassed to produce this. The tale of the boy-droid and his unrequited digital love certainly falls within the radar of what

Spielberg has proved he can do time and time again, and he does. Kind of... There are some wonderful ideas, yet many were turned off by its sheer scope, and the fact that it seems structured so obviously in three sections – the final one baffling many. It's a stab at truly adult sci-fi – one that was too mainstream to be culty, yet often too oblique to be truly popular. A troubled picture, but worth a look.

EXTRAS Interviews with cast and crew, behind-the-scenes featurettes, visit to Stan Winston studios, creation of SFX on set with effects drawings, trailer.

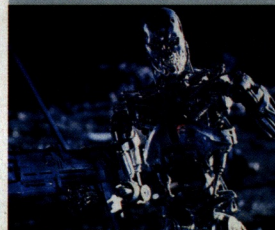
DVD INSIDER

TICKLING THE ARMPIT OF FILM FOR FACT



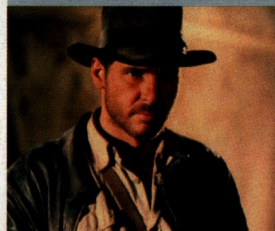
/ NO THING 2

At a recent Cinematheque event in the US, John Carpenter presented a screening of his 1982 classic *The Thing* and then took questions from the audience afterwards. On the subject of a sequel, he sounded uncharacteristically bitter: "The first one didn't do well at the box-office, so Universal wouldn't go there. Instead, Universal would do it as a 'reimagining'" then cattily suggested "now it would have teenagers in it and take place in the Bahamas." Meow!



/ TERMINATOR 3: THE RISE OF THE MACHINES

Factoids! A female Terminator will pop up, while the Schwarz's cyborg character will be glitchy and will probably switch sides throughout the film. The war against the machines and the humans will happen in 2001, and that will be documented in this picture. John Connor will emerge as the main character in this film, and he will have yet another Terminator as one of his allies. But another sentient machine will become one of Connor's chief enemies.



/ INDY 4

At the Golden Globe Awards in January, Steven Spielberg surprised audiences by actually being prepared to admit to the existence of the next Indiana Jones flick. "We have a title, but we're not ready to announce it", he remarked. I will give you one clue, though. Kate [Capshaw, Spielberg's wife] is in it." When he was asked if it meant reviving her *Temple of Doom* character in some sort of flashback, Spielberg answered "No. She'll be in the present." Mmmm, in-ter-resting...

DVD INSIDER

LIKE RESIDENT EVIL? LIKE POSTERS? LUCKY YOU...

/ RESIDENT EVIL THE MOVIE

Recently on the official *Resident Evil* movie site (located at <http://www.spe.sony.com/movie/s/residentevil/vote/index.php>) an online vote's been going on to determine which of these posters will become the actual one to promote the picture when it gets released on March 15th in the States. Voting's closed now, but we thought you'd like to check 'em out anyway. Just for the record, our fave is none of them.



THE PAROLE OFFICER [2001]



■ Starring: Steve Coogan

■ Director: John Duigan

■ Certificate: 12

■ Type: Comedy

■ Distributor: UIP

■ Price: £14.99

STEVE COOGAN



With the writing

talents of Armando Iannucci *et al* behind him, Coogan soars, yet alone, this brilliant mimic and comic actor *par excellence* struggles to transcend the mediocre. It's the same here. With Henry Normal assisting script-wise (the same partner that helped balls-up *Doctor Terrible's House of Horrible*) we're treated to a rather lame caper pic,

which struggles to conceal the joins between the numerous sketch-show style comic vignettes. There are funny moments – the statue's knob and the tale of Victor's end and subsequent daft burial (we won't spoil it) – yet it all feels a little stilted, while things aren't made better by Coogan's character simply being annoying. Coogan is a huge talent; we want him to succeed in movies... but he ain't going to with filler like this.

EXTRAS Making-of documentary, hidden deleted scenes, audio commentary, Atomic Kitten 'Eternal Flame' music video.

ROUND-UP

ALSO OUT THIS MONTH

A-HA LIVE IN OSLO The cube-headed band trot out their hit (surely 'hits' – Ed) on stage while presumably women rather than girls scream and chuck girdles at them. **BOYS DON'T CRY** The true story of

Teena Brandon, a transgender youth who preferred life in her male identity as Brandon Teena, with a rubber tinkler and everything. **BEAT STREET** We mentioned this 80s street-dance classic some months back, but its release was delayed. It will be

out this month so dust off the lino. **ALIVE** Boys freeze and the prospect of feasting on their mate's hairy backs becomes more appealing. **THE TWO JAKES** Sequel to the Polanski classic *Chinatown*. Not as good as its predecessor but not without merit.

SCREEN TOO

EARLY DRAFT OF THE HULK SEEPS OUT. HERE'S THE LATEST INCREDIBLE DETAILS.

TOP SECRET

ANG LET'S MOVIE OF THE HULK WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CGI FX HEAVY... BUT WHAT OF THE PLOT? HERE'S A PEEK AT SOME IDEAS CONTAINED IN A REAL EARLY SUMMARY OF THE SCRIPT.

Bruce Banner works at the University of California as a researcher. His fellow scientists consist of computer maintenance guy Robert Creel, hematologist Jennifer Sussman and her boyfriend and team leader Samuel Sterns. They're working on a project to enable humans to heal faster in a large dome called the 'Gammisphere'. Also around is Betty Ross, Banner's girl, and daughter is General Thaddeus Ross. Creel, in trying to copy data, floods the gammisphere while Sterns, Jennifer and Banner are in it. Jennifer dies, while Banner becomes super strong and Sterns becomes super-intelligent, with the ability to affect electronic appliances like phones and computers with just his mind. Banner, angry, changes into The Hulk and chases after Creel, attacking him but Creel manages to escapes. Sterns then goes bonkers with his new braininess and goes able to transform into whatever substance he comes into contact with. Creel then becomes the effect of the gamma rays on himself and Banner. There's a lot of smashing (building and helicopters) and The Hulk never speaks – like he did in the comics. We'll see how accurate this is when the flick hits in 2003.

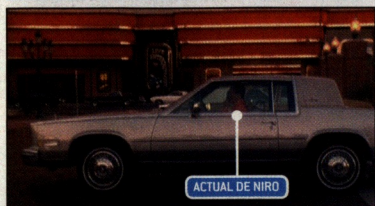
THE CUTTING ROOM FLAW

BECAUSE EVEN THE BEST OF US ARE PRONE TO MISTAKES **9# CASINO**

YOU KNOW WHEN YOU BUY A NEW SHIRT? IT LOOKS GREAT IN THE shop, although it pinches a little under the arms but you buy it anyway and go home feeling like a lady-magnet? Then you get home and it doesn't go

with anything, and you look like a boy-band member only fatter and older? Well that's like making a movie. Only the shirt's like the film and the tight sleeves are kind of like, you know, like mistakes and, well... look it sort of is.

GAFFE 1



ACTUAL DE NIRO



PLASTIC DE NIRO

BLOW ME!

It doesn't take frighteningly fine director Martin Scorsese long to make a gaffe in *Casino*. The opening scene shows Sam 'Ace' Rothstein (Robert De Niro), striding across a car park resplendent in his 70s flared finery and climbing into his silver land yacht. The car then blows sky high. However, eagle eyed viewers, or those particularly adept with the pause button, will be able to see clearly the jump from real De Niro to a pink jacketed mannequin.

GAFFE 2



MISSED GOB

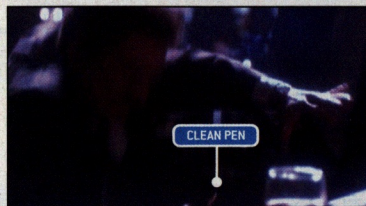


BOING!

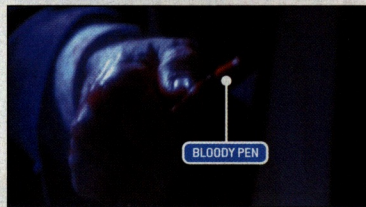
BATTY MAN

Nicholas 'Nicky' Santoro Sr (Joe Pesci) and his brother meet up with their fellow hoodlums. Unfortunately for the Santoros it's a set-up and they get brutally beaten to death with baseball bats. There are a couple of mess-ups here though. Firstly, watch the 'metal' bats closely as they thwack, you can see them bend – rubber perchance? Also when Bro Santoro gets it in the mush, he really doesn't. As our picture reveals, the bat misses his head as it swishes past.

GAFFE 3



CLEAN PEN



BLOODY PEN

GET THE POINT?

'Nicky' gets agitated when a bystander insults Rothstein, who was merely trying to return the stranger's pen. So he takes the pen and attacks the hapless chap, stabbing him repeatedly in the neck and performing the 'De Niro Stamp' (first seen in *Goodfellas*) on the unfortunate's head. When the pen goes in it's predictably covered in blood. Then we see 'Nicky' standing over his prey with the pen, but it's clean. Then he hands it to Rothstein and it's bloody again.

OOOOPS!

AND THE REST

REMO GAGGI IS TALKING TO ANDY STONE ABOUT ACE, there's a pack of smokes near Gaggi in his motor. The camera changes position during the scene a couple of times and once there's a Zippo in place of the

snouts, then the fags are back. Also... Rothstein is watching the telly and the news is on about him not having a gaming licence. A picture of Nicky flashes up with a toothpick in his mouth, but it's an image from a scene in the picture that's yet to happen.

Also... When Ginger gets chucked out of Nicky's club, you can clearly see the pads on Sharon Stone's hands used to break her fall. Also... When Rothstein goes to meet Nicky in the desert, Nicky drives off and you can see the film crew reflected in his car.



WORLD OF SUANE NO.12 STRAW DOGS (1971)

IVY LEAGUE MOVIES THAT WEAR SEERSUCKER, WHILE SIPPING MINT JULIPS AND READING MAILER.



■ **Starring:** Dustin Hoffman

■ **Director:** Sam Peckinpah

■ **Certificate:** Banned

■ **Type:** Thriller

■ **Distributor:** Anchor Bay

■ **Price:** \$15.00 approx



BANNED EH?

The only way you'll be able to watch this on your PS2 is by buying a Region One copy from the internet and using a multi-region boot-disk. We're not telling you to do this, it's at your discretion.

SO WHY IS IT BANNED THEN?

It tells the tale of David (Hoffman) and Amy Sumner (Susan George) who move from the US to her hometown in rural England. Here

Amy is raped by locals, bringing the mild-mannered mathematician's bestial side to the fore as he casts aside his in-built liberalism to become a man of violence.

DOESN'T SOUND TOO HARSH.

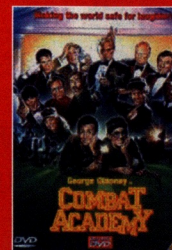
The rape of Amy is prolonged and deeply ambiguous, suggesting that while originally repulsed by the attack, by the end she's aroused and a willing participant. A real no-no at the BBFC.

SAY: "Intense and brutal, the regression of a man to his primal self would be moving were it not smothered beneath a maelstrom of cruelty and immorality."

DON'T SAY: "Worth it for the sex?"

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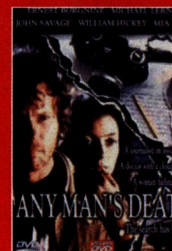
£3.99, PG, 1986, Blackstar

www.blackstar.co.uk

Two loons end up at Military Academy determined to be expelled. With John (Cheers) Ratzenberger.

EXTRAS What do you think? No.

■■■■■■■■■■ 3



ANY MAN'S DEATH

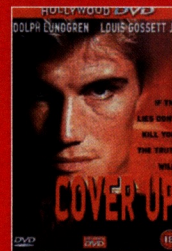
£3.99, 15, 1989, Blackstar

www.blackstar.co.uk

Journo in Angola finds Nazi war crim working on a cure for cancer. Featuring John (who?) Savage.

EXTRAS Again, um... no.

■■■■■■■■■■ 4



COVER UP

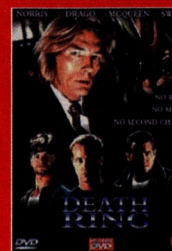
£3.99, 18, 1990, Blackstar

www.blackstar.co.uk

Journo (again) goes to US Naval base, finds life in jeopardy etc... With guns and Dolph Lundgren.

EXTRAS Still, no.

■■■■■■■■■■ 4



DEATH RING

£3.99, 18, 1992, Blackstar

www.blackstar.co.uk

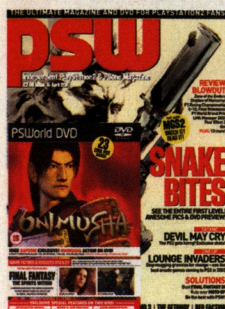
Ex-officer becomes prey for psycho millionaire in manhunt. Featuring Ramboisms and Don Swayze.

EXTRAS Are you still here?

■■■■■■■■■■ 3

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ISSUE #15

Witness the *Final Fantasy* movie trailer in crystal clear DVD quality, then beat *Moto GP* and *Final Fantasy IX* with PSW's legendary player's guides.



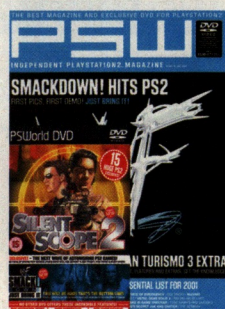
ISSUE #16

Quake III Revolution, *Red Faction* and *Animusha* on the DVD, Sega games coming to PS2, a complete *ZOE* walkthrough and lots more.



ISSUE #17

See *Silent Hill 2*, *GT3* and the stunning *Devil May Cry* on DVD, then go and finish *Quake III* and *Star Wars Starfighter* with our player's guides.



ISSUE #18

Crazy Taxi gets the complete player's guide treatment. Learn how to make top tunes with *MTV Music Generator 2*. And then there's the DVD...



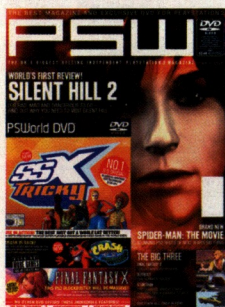
ISSUE #19

20 ways to be better at games, chat with the sultry Angelina Jolie, and *Animusha* solved and mapped. Plus, *Final Fantasy X* demo on DVD!



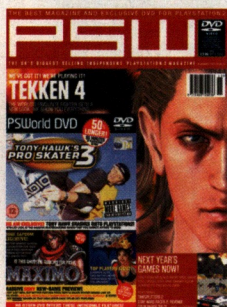
ISSUE #20

Read the A-Z of gaming, while *Red Faction* and *NBA Street* are taken to pieces in our solutions section. Plus *Devil May Cry* on the DVD!



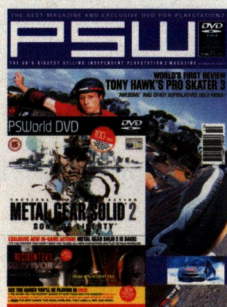
ISSUE #21

The world's first review of *Silent Hill 2* is joined by a solution for *Resident Evil: Code Veronica X*, while *SSX Tricky* features among others on the DVD.



ISSUE #22

What you'll be playing in 2002, ten whole pages of *Tekken 4*, not to mention *Tony Hawk 3* on the DVD. Yes, it's another stonker of an issue!



ISSUE #23

The first part of our complete *Silent Hill 2* solution is joined by exclusive *Metal Gear Solid 2* DVD footage and a free *Tony Hawk's 3* guide.



ISSUE #24

A world exclusive report into the making of *TimeSplitters 2* is complemented by the second part of the *Silent Hill 2* solution.



ISSUE #25

Agent Under Fire is given the walkthrough treatment, coupled with a world exclusive preview of *Medal of Honour*. *Spider-Man* is on the DVD.



ISSUE #26

Metal Gear Solid 2 gets cracked wide open with a massive walkthrough, while *Virtua Fighter 4*, *GT Concept* and *Final Fantasy XI* are on the DVD.

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Due to popular demand, issues 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 are completely sold out. So let that be a lesson to you. Order your back issues now! DVD with issues 11 onwards.

THEY'RE GOING FAST! – CALL 01858 438825

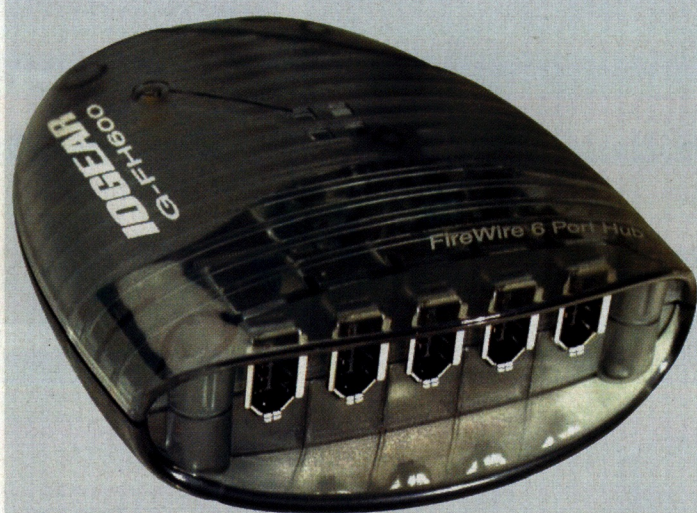
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2



3



4



UPGRADE

SMALL, PERFECTLY FORMED, PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE.

1

SMALL AND BOUNCY

It's just a screen! A full-colour web browser screen, actually, which allows you to speak to 18-year-old men pretending to be 24-year-old women while yourself pretending to be a 38-year-old housewife. The internet, anywhere.

■ POGO £299
■ Carphone Warehouse 01302 325 225

2

EVERYTHING IN ONE PLACE

You know how most tech items have hardly anything in them when you open them up? Not the Multitainer – it houses a DVD player, MP3 player, CD player, web access, email, fax and karaoke. It even plays games. Packed!

■ Multitainer £799
■ Available from Fujitsu 01344 475 555

3

COME TOGETHER

A hub, a centre of activity, a meeting place, an important centre. Particularly in gaming, where this unassuming piece of transparent plastic opens up the possibility of iLink multiplayer. *TimeSplitters 2* uses it. Prepare.

■ IO Gear Hub £60
■ Available from www.iogear.com

4

SILVER WEB SURFER

Current PCs only fit in the pockets of elephants. Future PCs will be drilled into your DNA by Bill Gates at birth. In the meantime we have this stopgap – handhelds. See those three buttons? Ctrl, Alt and Delete, probably.

■ SX45 Pocket PC £400-500 with contract
■ Available from Fujitsu 01344 475 555

LONG RANGE
FORECASTCAMPAIGNING FOR THE
RETURN OF MAGNETIC
WEATHER SYMBOLS.

SLED STORM 2

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS BIG
TYPE: SPORTS RELEASE: MARCH 29

Fast becoming a name you can rely on, EA Sports Big has only made one error of judgement so far with *Rumble Racing*. Thankfully this snow stormer looks like continuing the SSX trend of outrageous stunts, gob smacking visuals and huge fun.

OUTLOOK: SUNNY



GRANDIA 2

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
TYPE: ADVENTURE RELEASE: MARCH 29

Still itching for some *Final Fantasy* action? Desperate for some magical combat stattery? Despite looking decidedly old skool, *Grandia 2* might fill the gap until *FFX* arrives. The original was the best non-*Final Fantasy* RPG on PSone.

OUTLOOK: BALMY

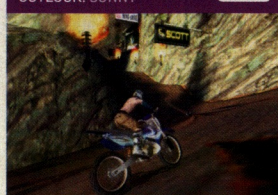


FREEKSTYLE

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS BIG
TYPE: SPORTS RELEASE: MAY 31

ATV Offroad Fury was fantastic in multi-player, but didn't quite make enough of the stunting element. *MX2002* was great fun but just lacked that final sheen of polish. *FreeKstyle* combines elements of both and could be the ultimate off-roader.

OUTLOOK: SUNNY



TITLE	PUBLISHER	TYPE	RELEASE
MARCH			
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002	EA SPORTS	FIGHTING	22ND
SHIFTERS	3DO	ACTION ADVENTURE	22ND
SLED STORM 2	EA SPORTS	EXTREME SPORTS	29TH
GRANDIA II	UBI SOFT	ADVENTURE	29TH
CONFLICT ZONE	UBI SOFT	ACTION STRATEGY	29TH
APRIL			
NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2	EA	RACING	5TH
LMA MANAGER 2002	CODEMASTERS	FOOTBALL	5TH
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002	EA SPORTS	GOLF	5TH
ALIENS COLONIAL MARINES	EA	SHOOTING	5TH
ARMY MEN RTS	3DO	STRATEGY	12TH
MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	CODEMASTERS	BOXING	26TH
ISS2	KONAMI	FOOTBALL	26TH
MAY			
SVEN GORAN'S WORLD CUP CHALLENGE	ANCO	FOOTBALL	10TH
SVEN GORAN'S WORLD CUP MANAGER	ANCO	FOOTBALL	10TH
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE	SHOOTING	CODEMASTERS	10TH
FREEKSTYLE	EA SPORTS BIG	EXTREME SPORTS	31ST
NO ONE LIVES FOREVER	VIVENDI	SHOOTING	31ST



NO ONE LIVES FOREVER PUBLISHER: VIVENDI TYPE: SHOOTING RELEASE: MAY 31

If you like your shooting of the single-player, first-person variety then PS2 is fast becoming the machine to have. *Red Faction*'s time at the top could soon be up, with *Star Trek Elite Force* and this, *No One Lives Forever*, both

snapping at its heels. Crammed with humour, ingenuity and gripping action, *NOLF* should bring a refreshing new angle to the well-worn style.

OUTLOOK: SUNNY



SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS
TYPE: SHOOTING RELEASE: MAY 10

It was quite a while ago when *Soldier of Fortune* appeared on PC, and many first-person shooters have come and gone since then. This makes us wonder just how well *SOF* has aged. One thing is certain: it's still one of the most violent games ever.

OUTLOOK: BALMY



ALIENS COLONIAL MARINES

PUBLISHER: EA
TYPE: SHOOTING RELEASE: APRIL 5

We're still waiting in nervous anticipation to get our hands on a playable version of this scary looking game. If it can match the tension of *Alien Resurrection*, this could well be yet another contender for the best first-person shooter on PS2.

OUTLOOK: SUNNY



MIKE TYSON BOXING

PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS
TYPE: BOXING RELEASE: APRIL 26

Knockout Kings might have stolen a bit of his thunder, but Iron Mike's entry into the ring won't go unnoticed, even if it's just because we can pit him against Audley Harrison and give him a good pummelling without losing any flesh.

OUTLOOK: SUNNY



ANTICIPATION KEY

WELCOMING WARM FRONTS, OR A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT COMING?

SUNNY
What you should
be saving forBALMY
Looking good for
the weekendCLOUDY
Not bad, may
improve laterRAINY
We all know it's
going to suckLIGHTNING
Has the potential
for disaster

KEEP YOUR BEDROOM TIDY

Trade in your tired and unwanted titles at **GAME**

PS2 TOP 10

- 1/ MAX PAYNE**
When the 'bullet time' novelty wears off, this is massively overhyped.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #25 **7**
- 2/ GRAND THEFT AUTO 3**
Incredibly violent, fantastically free-roaming and fun. We love it, you love it.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #22 **9**
- 3/ DROPSHIP**
Decent flying shooters were a bit thin on the ground until this arrived.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #24 **7**
- 4/ PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER**
The only footy game you need ever own. We still play this every day.
■ 1-4 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **9**
- 5/ JAMES BOND IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE**
A bit short, but otherwise fantastic. The best bit of Bondage for ages.
■ 1-4 player ■ Reviewed Issue #24 **8**
- 6/ RED FACTION**
Everyone loves blowing things up, whether it's walls or ugly goons.
■ 1-2 players ■ Reviewed Issue #18 **8**
- 7/ DYNASTY WARRIORS 2**
Are you all tempted by the bargain price or the mentally chaotic skirmishes?
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #11 **7**
- 8/ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3**
The third update of the classic series is proving as popular as the first.
■ 1-2 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **9**
- 9/ DEVIL MAY CRY**
If you loved the *Resident Evil* games you must own this. Beautifully challenging.
■ 1 players ■ Reviewed Issue #22 **10**
- 10/ FIFA FOOTBALL 2002**
Has *FIFA*'s dominance finally come to an end with this disappointing update?
■ 1-4 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **5**

DVD TOP 10

- 1/ FINAL FANTASY: THE MOVIE**
Visually remarkable, incredibly hackneyed and not to all tastes.
■ Rating: PG **7**
- 2/ MEMENTO**
A twisty-turny challenge, for those unafraid of something original.
■ Rating: 18 **8**
- 3/ RUSH HOUR 2**
If you can tolerate the bloody irritating Chris Tucker, this is mindless fun.
■ Rating: 12 **7**
- 4/ PEARL HARBOUR**
From the *Titanic* school of big budget film-making, this is just as vacuous.
■ Rating: 15 **4**
- 5/ SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION**
At a bargain price in most shops, this is a must for your DVD collection.
■ Rating: 15 **9**
- 6/ SHREK**
Not quite as good as *Toy Story* but pretty close. You won't regret it.
■ Rating: U **8**
- 7/ WEDDING PLANNER**
Predictable rom-com where J Lo falls for the groom. Will they? Won't they?
■ Rating: PG **4**
- 8/ MALLRATS**
Trademark Kevin Smith flick featuring the usual references and humour.
■ Rating: U **7**
- 9/ MUMMY RETURNS**
Wait for the DVD release of the *Indiana Jones* trilogy. This is a dire imitation.
■ Rating: 12 **4**
- 10/ BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY**
The perfect present for the woman in your life. Men can enjoy this one too.
■ Rating: 15 **7**

PS2 RENTAL

- 1/ GRAND THEFT AUTO**
This game is so huge it'll require weeks of re-rentals. Try it then buy it.
■ 1-2 players ■ Reviewed Issue #22 **9**
- 2/ JAMES BOND IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE**
Should that be 'A gent' under fire? He is wearing a tux, after all. Classy game.
■ 1-4 player ■ Reviewed Issue #24 **8**
- 3/ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3**
Those magnificent men on their flying... planks. Rent it. Then buy it.
■ 1-4 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **9**
- 4/ WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**
Beautiful, comprehensive but strangely uninvolved. Worth a try, though.
■ 1-2 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **7**
- 5/ MAX PAYNE**
Bullet time is the game's only innovation. Otherwise pretty linear with clunky looks.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #25 **7**
- 6/ DEVIL MAY CRY**
Exquisitely crafted, intense and a colossal challenge. Try this one now.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #22 **10**
- 7/ WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT**
Will satisfy WWF fans, but we hoped for better things in the PS2 incarnation.
■ 1-4 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **7**
- 8/ FIFA 2002**
This is what rentals are for. You didn't believe us until you played it, did you?
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **5**
- 9/ PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER**
And as you're finding out, *PES* is by far the superior game. So buy it.
■ 1-2 players ■ Reviewed Issue #23 **9**
- 10/ DROPSHIP**
A decent shooter but the flying and driving mix doesn't quite work.
■ 1 player ■ Reviewed Issue #24 **7**

GAME

Software chart supplied by Game



UK DVD sales chart compiled by HMV



UK PS2 rental chart compiled by Blockbuster

On the broadened horizon...

BOOK



EVERYTHING'S EVENTUAL – STEPHEN KING

A fresh collection of short stories from the master. Watch out for numerous films based on these in the future.
OUT: March 19

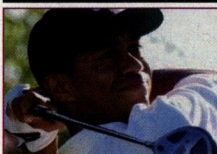
MOVIE



THE PANIC ROOM

The latest offering from David Fincher stars Jodie Foster. When her house is broken into she seeks refuge in a secure panic room before fighting back.
OUT: March 8th

TV



US MASTERS

The first major of the year. Will Tiger trounce the field or will the Europeans humble the Americans on their home turf yet again. C'mon Faldo, you can do it.
ON: April 11-14

LIVE



TRAVIS

The Scottish lads follow up their massive selling third album *The Invisible Band* with a full UK tour.
ON: London Docklands Arena, March 22
Tickets: www.aloud.com

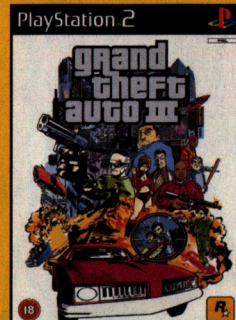
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Trade-in games must be in working order and of satisfactory quality.
- DVD movies must be in working order, in original packaging, contain a BBFC rating and must be formatted for region 2.
- The value of the trade in(s) must not exceed the price of the product(s) you are purchasing.
- No credit can be issued.
- Certain titles excluded.
- This does not affect your statutory rights.



FREE GRAND THEFT AUTO DVD MOVIE WORTH £19.99

WHEN YOU BUY GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 FOR PLAYSTATION2

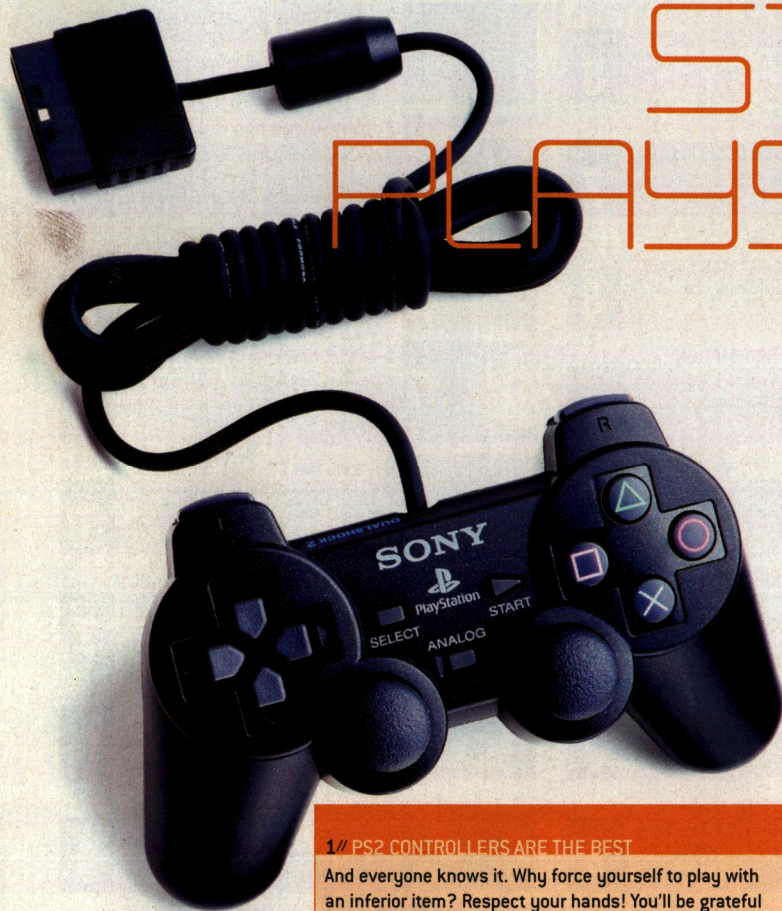


GAME

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Offer only valid on redemption of this voucher, which cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.
- Voucher is redeemable at any GAME store in the UK or Eire.
- This voucher is not recoverable and is not exchangeable for cash.
- This voucher is redeemable against Grand Theft Auto 3 on PlayStation2 only.
- Only one voucher may be used per product.
- This offer may be withdrawn at any time without prior notice.
- Only available while stocks last.
- This voucher is valid until 03/04/02.
- Offer only available to persons aged 18 or above.

44 REASONS TO STICK WITH PLAYSTATION2



1// PS2 CONTROLLERS ARE THE BEST

And everyone knows it. Why force yourself to play with an inferior item? Respect your hands! You'll be grateful you did in later life when you can still open jam jars without the degrading assistance of a home helper.

2// NAMCO!

You know which console the arcade people always turn to first. In case you don't: it's PlayStation2.

3// 3DO!

Increased spend on development for Xbox and Gamecube may result in fewer 3DO products appearing on PS2. We can but pray.

4// ALL THE TWOS...

TimeSplitters 2, *Onimusha 2*, *Soul Calibur 2*, *Red Faction 2*, *Space Channel 5 Part 2*...

5// ALL THE THREES...

Colin McRae 3, *Tenchu 3*, *Driver 3*, *V-Rally 3*...

6// GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

Because you'll still be getting it out to show people how damn good it is this time next year. "Look, Gran! I'm murdering a prostitute! Do you want to kill her pimp?"

7// ALL THE FOURS...

Virtua Fighter 4, *Tekken 4*, *Tony Hawk 4*, *Grand Theft Auto 4* [they're bound to, aren't they?]

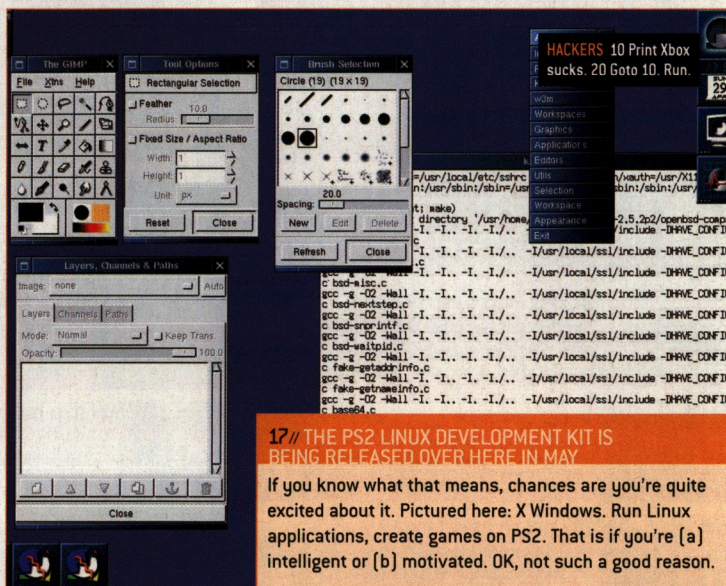
8// THE SIX...

Ridge Racer 6. It might actually be good. Stranger things have happened.

9// PS2 DOESN'T LOOK STUPID

A little purple box with a handle? A console with big green globes on it? What are you, some kind of five-year-old? Do you want people to laugh at you? Stick with discreet, stylish black and blue – it never goes out of fashion. Your interior designer will thank you for it.

XBOX THIS, GAMECUBE THAT – BOLLOCKS TO THE BOTH OF THEM. HERE'S WHY PLAYSTATION2 IS SET TO REMAIN THE NUMBER ONE GAMING CONSOLE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.



17// THE PS2 LINUX DEVELOPMENT KIT IS BEING RELEASED OVER HERE IN MAY

If you know what that means, chances are you're quite excited about it. Pictured here: X Windows. Run Linux applications, create games on PS2. That is if you're (a) intelligent or (b) motivated. OK, not such a good reason.

10// BECAUSE YOU'VE SPENT ENOUGH MONEY ALREADY

You blew £300 on it, now it's only £200. You really should get your money's worth out of it before moving on. Even post-price drop, a PS2 and a few games is a hefty investment. Do you want to waste it all by encouraging its death and buying a rival console? Come on, show some loyalty, people.

11// PRICE CUTS?

Coming down to £169 within weeks, according to the gossip we hear. If you've just bought one you have our sympathy. If you don't already have one we envy your first few months of discovery.

12// NINTENDO MAKES GAMES FOR CHILDREN

Or at least Nintendo makes nice games for happy, nice

people. If you want death, killing, murder, blood, hurt, cutting, slicing, grazing, liquidising and tenderising, you need PS2 – more killing than any other machine!

13// GRAN TURISMO

Sony invented it, it's not going to any other console.

14// YOU CAN STAND IT ON ITS SIDE

It's the little things that make the difference.

15// BROADBAND IS COMING SOON

Well, so they say. In the meantime, be grateful about how much money you're saving by not having it.

16// HARD DRIVE IS COMING SOON

Well, so they say. In the meantime, keep Sony profitable by forking out for an extortionate memory card to save your PES goals.

18// PS2 PLAYS DVDS

So does Xbox – if you buy a special remote control on top of the machine's initial £299 cost.

19// PLUG SOCKET PILE-UP

There are already too many wires hanging out of that one socket round the back of your TV. Any more plugged in would present a significant fire hazard.

20// SCART PILE-UP

Not to mention the lack of connections on your TV.

21// TOO MUCH NEGATIVE ELECTRICAL ENERGY

An extra games machine may have severe feng shui implications too.

22// SEGA!

Gamecube gets *Monkey Ball*. Xbox gets *Gun Valkyrie*. PlayStation2 gets *Virtua Fighter 4*. That's a fair deal as far as we're concerned.





ENGAGE FUN ROUTINES
Don't encourage him.
He's rich enough already.

23// EVERYONE LOVES TO HATE MICROSOFT

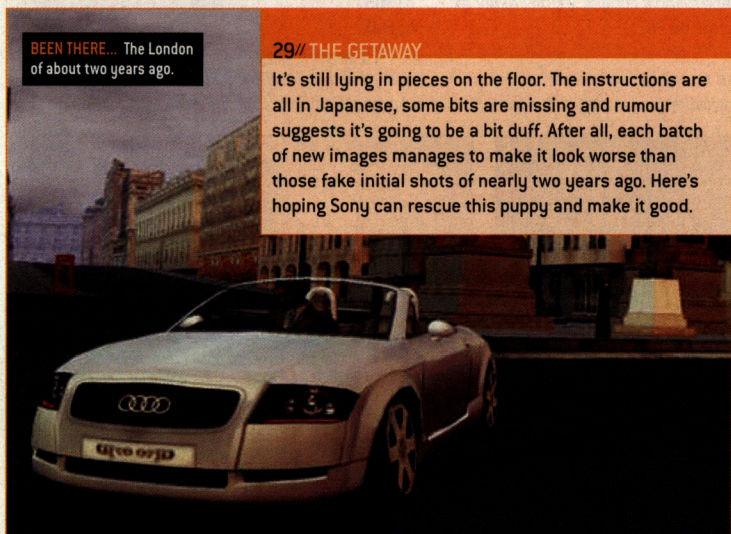
Just ask your IT support guy.

25// BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

Dance along with Britney Spears. Possibly the Best Game Ever, but most likely the worst. We'll see...



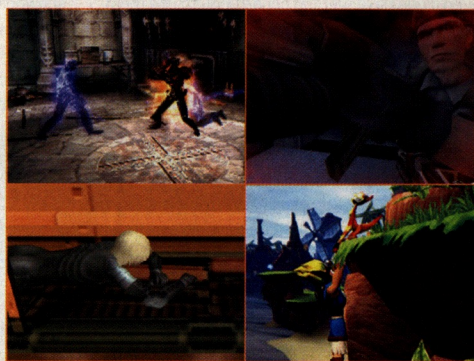
WE REALLY LOVE YOU
So much that it hurts.



BEEN THERE... The London of about two years ago.

29// THE GETAWAY

It's still lying in pieces on the floor. The instructions are all in Japanese, some bits are missing and rumour suggests it's going to be a bit duff. After all, each batch of new images manages to make it look worse than those fake initial shots of nearly two years ago. Here's hoping Sony can rescue this puppy and make it good.



35// ONLY ON PS2

Metal Gear 2, *GT3*, *Devil May Cry*, *TimeSplitters*, *MTV Music Generator 2*, *Jak and Daxter*. A whole bundle of extraordinary games are exclusive to PlayStation2 – and staying that way. Quality and depth, that's the key.

24// FINAL FANTASY X, XI

A lot of people like that kind of thing.

26// SWAPSIES!

Your friends all have PlayStation2s. Why buy new games when you can swap them, borrow them, steal them or pop round to play something new for free?

27// IT'S WHAT EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT

If you can't hold your own in a conversation about the merits of *Grand Theft Auto 3*, then you might as well dump your friends, change your name and move out of the country. If you don't own a PS2 consider yourself a social outcast.

30// TWISTABLE LOGO

Endless seconds of fun!

31// RED LIGHT DOUBLES AS SECURITY SYSTEM

Glowing light says "Back off! There's an alarm system in here!" to any thief peering through your lounge window. Unless they have a torch and a knowledge of consoles, in which case it says "Steal me! I'm a desirable piece of consumer electronics!" If thieves want something, you know that it's good.

32// CELEBS LIKE PS2!

Famous people such as Jonathon Ross and Iain Lee play PS2. Robbie Williams has probably got one, but

that's a guess. Associate yourself with the stars!

33// GIRLS PREFER BIG BRAND NAMES

All girls have heard of *Parappa* and PlayStation. Telling them you've got *Halo* and an Xbox is akin to telling them you've got your last three week's worth of urine saved up in a barrel.

34// POSSIBLE NUCLEAR MISSILE CONTROL DEVICE FOR TERRORISTS

According to the papers it is, anyway. It may have just been an exaggeration to make the thing sound more powerful than it really is. If that's the case, it worked. It's become folklore.

36// THE BLUE LIGHT LOOKS COOL

Does that make us sound really shallow?

37// PS2 SOLD OUT OVER CHRISTMAS

And that's really sold out, not just the fake sold out generated by putting new consoles on sale in stupidly limited launch numbers.

38// IT'S THE ONLY CONSOLE WITH MATS!

You're drunk, she's drunk. Break down the barriers of personal space by standing close to one another and jumping about. Girls look better when jumping about.

39// USES OLD PSONE TECHNOLOGY

Re-use those old joypads, leave that same TV connector in. Convenient, and good for the environment. Shame about those memory cards though.

40// PLAYS PSONE GAMES

Although they all look really shit nowadays, even the ones we remember as being totally brilliant.

41// CHANGE IS BAD

Unfamiliar games, different button layouts, confusing ways of making things work. It's just unnecessary.

42// EVERYONE'S GOT A PS2 ALREADY

Well, they have, haven't they? Don't go. Please.

43// PS2 ALSO DOUBLES AS A SHELF

You can put things on a PS2. Xbox has a slopy top, Gamecube has a flip-top lid. They just didn't consider today's compact housing.

44// YOU CAN CONTINUE TO READ PSW

And without that surely there would be no reason to carry on?

Q&A



WHERE ANSWERS ARE A GIVEN

/ BE HER

Question:

When's the Britney Spears game going to appear? I'm quite keen on it. From a gameplay perspective, obviously.

Answer:

"It should be out by this May, but with bad news for fans – you don't get to 'be' Britney. Instead, the pop princess simply watches you control other dancers while issuing advice and congratulating your play. The reason? Apparently the developer was worried that 'perverts' would buy the game if you were able to actually manipulate Britney. Frankly, we'll probably still buy it anyway."

/ LIAR!

Question:

A friend at my college tells me he can get me a PlayStation2 boot disc for £20, and this will let me play copied games. Is he right? I thought you couldn't get boot discs for PS2?

Answer:

"Happily for Sony there is no such thing as a PS2 boot disc, the likes of which saw Dreamcast's short life shortened further by the ready availability of pirated games. It would appear that Sony performed its homework rather well when building this sturdy machine."

/ IS IT IN YET?

Question:

Any more news on *Colin McRae 3* yet? The wait is starting to get boring. What's with the delay?

Answer:

"Dunno. The graphics?"

/ ON HOLD

Question:

Please can you print Sony's contact numbers so we can all call them to complain about its bordered games, its over-priced accessories and its extremely shoddy customer support.

Answer:

"Call 08705 998 877 for the PlayStation Care Line. It's usually busy."

28// PS2 HAS THE COOLEST ADVERTS

Have you seen the *WipeOut Fusion* adverts? Best game ads ever, those. Doesn't it make you feel all warm just to know you're slightly associated with such genius?



DISTRACTIONS

WHERE PROMOTIONAL PEOPLE TRY TO ASSOCIATE THEIR GAMES WITH HAPPINESS BY GIVING AWAY FREE THINGS.

WIN!

SNOWBOARDING CLOBBER AND A FREE GAME!

BECOME THE ENVY OF THE ASPEN SET THIS SEASON WITH A SUPER COOL SNOWBOARD AND JACKET COMBO!

PERHAPS THIS ISN'T THE BEST OF COMPETITION prizes if you live in Scunthorpe. Or just about anywhere else in the UK. But we figured a snowboard and hilariously over-sized snowboarding jacket would be cool items to own, even if you never get the opportunity to use them and they lay idle in the corner of your room for the rest of eternity. Plus Shaun Palmer uses this exact board and (probably) wears this jacket, or one very similar. And they're featured in his game, the

8/10 rated *Shaun Palmer Pro Snowboarder*, which you can also win. Our generosity knows no bounds. No, really.

FIRST PRIZE

Your very own snowboard, an NFA 'Stormbreaker' snowboard jacket and a copy of *Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder* on PS2.

RUNNERS-UP

Three runners-up will each receive a snowboarding jacket and a copy of the game.

TO BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING THESE LUXURY ITEMS, ALL FOR THE PRICE OF A STAMP, JUST ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:
WHAT IS THE CHEMICAL FORMULA FOR SNOW?

- a) CO₂
- b) H₂O
- c) H₂O

Head your entries 'Is there a cash alternative?' and send them to PSW, 55 Lowlands Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 3AW.



// THE ULTIMATE IN SNOW UTILITY WEAR!

- 1 Keep yourself at the summit of mountain fashion!
- 2 Ideal for the winter ornithologist. Look! A robin!
- 3 Feeling and looking hot with the NFA Stormbreaker!

All competitions are subject to PSW terms and conditions. See page 8 for details.

EAT MY
GOAL

GOAL OF THE MONTH

PLAY PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER AND WIN A PAIR OF UMBRO FOOTY BOOTS!

THE PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER HIERARCHY HAS CHANGED significantly this month. That man Foley – for so long the undisputed Daddy of PES – has suffered a hilarious downturn in fortune, slumping to the bottom of the office heap following several memorable thrashings at the hands of Nutter and behind-the-scenes production monkey Horgan. Stabbing hunger pains and a faulty joypad are his most frequently used excuses. Lack of tactical awareness is the harsh reality.

In between the temper tantrums (Foley) and self-satisfying smugness (Nutter) we just about found time to have a look at the sackload of reader's goals. There were tons of entries – some of them rubbish, others quite good – and eventually we plumped for this superb Beckham free kick from just short of the halfway line as the winning goal. 'Flukey' Luke Paterson from Cleveland will soon be receiving a pair of Umbro football boots for all his efforts.

We employ you to take a look at this month's DVD and see the Beckham wonder goal for yourself. Then if you think you can do any better (we can, but we're not allowed to enter, dammit), save your best effort onto your memory card and send it in to us here at PSW (please allow 14 days for the safe return of your memory card – we'll be gentle with it). Each and every month we'll put the best three goals on the DVD, and a brand new pair of Umbro football boots will be sent to the winner.

Don't forget to include your shoe size and a return address. And to avoid any shouting-down-the-phone-unpleasantness, please make sure you send your memory card by Registered Delivery.

Send your entries to:
PSW Goal of the Month, PSW, Computec Media, 55
Lowlands Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 3AW.



WARNING!

Sometimes a games company doesn't seem to want a game reviewed by us because, for its own reasons, it would rather just get it into the shops without us seeing it. IT WON'T WORK.



THE WORST PS2 GAMES EVER
AVOID AT ALL COSTS!

#5 WOODY WOODPECKER

>> WHAT HAPPENED?

We received an early preview version a couple of months ago. We thought it was rubbish. Strangely, a finished review copy never materialised. Funny that.

>> AND THE RESULT?

Similar in style and execution to the Crash Bandicoot games: colourful graphics, simplistic running/jumping gameplay, nothing too cerebral... We might even have had a few kind words to say about Woody, were it not for the fact that they couldn't even be bothered to send us a review copy.

>> SO JUST HOW CRAP ARE WE TALKING HERE?

Not as bad as the usual atrocities Cryo

put together. Old PSone owners may remember the appalling (and French) Versailles, the quite dreadful Pax Corpus, the senses-offending Asterix and Obelisk, and bad film licence Virus. For a Cryo game, it's a marked improvement.

>> AND HAD IT BEEN REVIEWED?

If we'd given it to Steve "I'm hard – I've got tattoos and everything" Williams to review, you'd probably be looking at a 3/10. If we'd given it to "Middle of the road" Mikey Foley, there's a good chance it'd get 4/10. It all depends.

>> FINAL WORD?

We wouldn't buy it. Although we actually did to write this article. But you see the point we're trying to make.

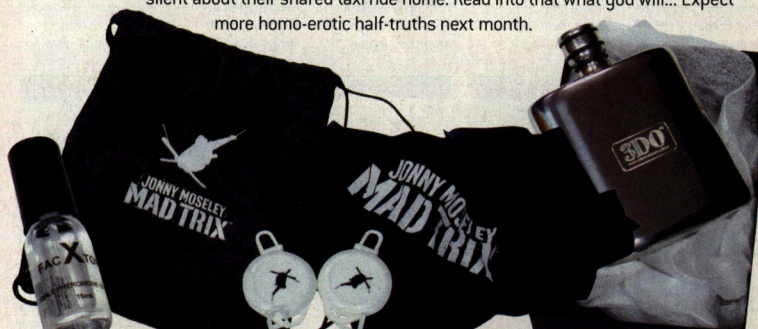
“LET’S NEVER
SPEAK OF THIS...”

GAME COMPANIES WANT PSW TO LOVE THEIR GAMES.
THEY SEND US GOODIES. WE GIVE THEM AWAY.

THE WINNER//

A cheap nylon bag handed over by a 3DO representative concealed the best selection of PR bribes this month: one chrome effect hip flask (infuriatingly branded with large 3DO logo, thus preventing its use in social situations), one long sleeved T-shirt, large, and therefore unwearable by all but one member of the team, two ski pass holders to be used in the unlikely event of one going skiing, and of course, the bag itself. A poor selection of supposed gift items, but unfortunately the best the PR world had to offer us this month.

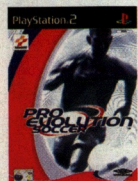
Of considerably more interest, although not actually a PR bribe as Pierce purchased this himself via the worldwide web, was a 15ml bottle of male pheromone spray. When liberally applied to the head and upper body, the spray has the effect of attracting women to your close proximity for the purpose of sexual relations. Or so the theory goes. When put into practice by Cutlack and Pierce at a recent Electronic Arts press event, the nearest they came to intimate relations was the offer of a fight from a rival journalist – although they remained suspiciously silent about their shared taxi ride home. Read into that what you will... Expect more homo-erotic half-truths next month.



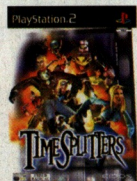
WANT TO WIN THIS SHAMEFUL ARRAY OF PROMO-TAT? Then send your name and address to 'I need spray to attract women', PSW, 55 Lowlands Road, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, HA1 3AW. The winner will be picked at random from the deluge of entries we're expecting to receive.

ESSENTIAL 50

THE TOP 50 PS2 GAMES YOU SIMPLY MUST OWN. THIS MONTH WE SAY HELLO TO MAXIMO AND BID FAREWELL TO SOUL REAVER 2.

**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
The most complete football game on any console ever. An essential buy.

**TIME SPLITTERS**

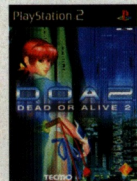
■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #11
Great in solo mode, outstanding in four-player. If you're buying one shoot 'em up, get this.

**NHL 2002**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Not everyone's cuppa, but ice hockey fans will delight in the vast range of options.

**QUAKE 3**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #16
Spectacular conversion of the PC masterpiece. Jumping made difficult with joypad.

**DEAD OR ALIVE 2**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #12
Visually astounding kung-fu kickery. It's initially difficult to master, but well worth the effort.

**FORMULA ONE 2001**

■ RATED: 10/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #17
A couple of minor bugs aside, this is every Formula One fan's dream come true. Essential.

**GRAN TURISMO 3**

■ RATED: 10/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #17
Everything you could possibly want from a driving game on one shiny disc. Remarkable.

**MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #17
Create your own phat toons from scratch and annoy your friends.

**CRAZY TAXI**

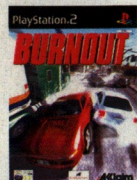
■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #17
Superb conversion of the high-octane arcade game, packed full of extras for PS2 owners.

**RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #20
The biggest and best Resident Evil to date, but it's just a tad formulaic.

**ONIMUSHA WARLORDS**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #18
Excellent hack 'n' slash action adventure from the Res Evil people.

**BURNOUT**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
Nothing gets the adrenaline pumping quite like a game of Burnout. Mental high-speed racing.

**JAMES BOND IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #24
The best bits of Bond rolled into one. Stealth, driving, blasting, the lot.

**WIPEOUT FUSION**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
More of the same from the latest Wipeout, but when it's this good, why bother changing it?

**WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Not as good as we'd hoped, but it'll suffice until Colin McRae 3 turns up.

**SSX TRICKY**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
So updated it's practically brand new - spectacular, colourful and undeniably hip.

**HALF-LIFE**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Still the best PC game ever, and a stoater on PS2. You haven't lived until you've played it.

**NBA STREET**

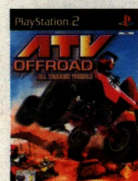
■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #19
Gasp! A basketball game that's fun to play. Even if you don't like the sport, you'll love this.

**READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #11
Comical fighters and a lighthearted approach make this the boxing champ.

**SHAUN PALMER SNOWBOARDING**

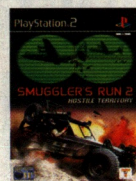
■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Great two-player and a more trick-based ride than SSX, it's a real cracker.

**ATV: OFF-ROAD FURY**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #20
Thoroughly entertaining off-road racer, best played with mates.

**AIRBLADE**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Visually stunning hoverboard game, but the gameplay structure is too linear for our liking.

**SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
Brilliant terrain design and massive levels bring alive the A-B objectives.

**METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #24
Mightily impressive espionage game, spoiled slightly by lengthy cut-scenes.

**RED FACTION**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #18
Innovative first-person shooter [the walls break] with good story, but jerky in two player.

**WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Lacks the polish of most PS2 games, but still the best grappler around.

**TIME CRISIS 2**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Enjoyable arcade shooter that lacks longevity [just three levels!]. Make sure you've got a gun.

**BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #24
Beautiful sword-based slashing, with almost endless character upgrading.

**UNREAL TOURNAMENT**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #13
Disappointingly j-e-r-k-y version of the PC classic, but still fun to play.

**JAK AND DAXTER**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
An absolutely huge world to explore in the PS2's classiest platformer. Pure gaming escapism.

**DEVIL MAY CRY**

■ RATED: 10/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
Astonishing to watch and a blast to play. But boo to the big-bordered UK conversion.

**SILENT HILL 2**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #21
Disturbing, gory, unnerving, chilling, menacing, offensive... and all the better for it.

**SPY HUNTER**

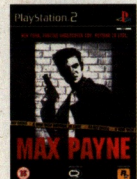
■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #21
Fun but flawed update to the 80s coin-op classic. Top graphics, but it's too short and linear.

**ZONE OF THE ENDERS**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #15
Enormous mechanical mechs slap each other about. Good fun.

**TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2001**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #16
Sports games don't come more relaxing. Complete with revolutionary swing.

**MAX PAYNE**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
Overrated PC shoot 'em up famed for its Matrix-style effects. Violent, stylish and a good conversion.

**KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
Remarkably tranquil platforming experience with devious puzzles.

**DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #21
Usual extreme sports madness with all the typical Hawk's-esque fun.

**MAXIMO: GHOSTS TO GLORY**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #26
Stylish platformer with plenty of hack 'n' slash swordery. Top UK version, too.

**GRAND THEFT AUTO 3**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
Engraving crime caper with stunning visuals and great story. The surprise hit of last year.

**HEADHUNTER**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
Solid if unoriginal third-person actioner, with cool superbike action in-between missions.

**ACE COMBAT 4: DISTANT THUNDER**

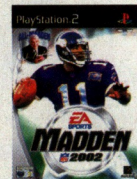
■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
Exhilarating aerial combat. This is Top Gun in everything but name.

**MOTO GP 2**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
Still not a complete season's tracks, but slick handling and all the new liveries make it worthwhile.

**STATE OF EMERGENCY**

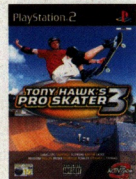
■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #25
Ultra-violent and morally dubious riot sim. Content makes it strictly for adults.

**MADDEN NFL 2002**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #22
The millionth Madden retreads the same old ground, but it's still the best of its kind.

**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #21
Fantastic ball physics, strangely relaxing to play.

**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3**

■ RATED: 9/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #23
Fast, hard to master and full of beauty. Excellent replay value. Get it now.

**EXTREME G-3**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #20
Faster than a greased cougar down a water chute. Fabulous futuristic racing fun.

**ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2001**

■ RATED: 8/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #21
Love him or loathe him, his game is pretty good.

**STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER**

■ RATED: 7/10
■ ISSUE: PSW #16
Star Wars games are usually rubbish. This one isn't. Hence the 7/10 rating.

IS THIS WHAT WE SHOULD EXPECT?

PSW
FIRST WITH
THE GAMES
YOU NEED
TO SEE

FIND OUT ONLY IN NEXT MONTH'S PSW, WHEN WE GO BEHIND THE SCENES OF **TOMB RAIDER PS2** AND BRING YOU THE WORLD'S FIRST MAJOR EXPOSÉ, THE FULL BACKGROUND STORY AND EXCLUSIVE GAMEPLAY FOOTAGE ON THE DVD. SEE IT FIRST, SEE IT ONLY IN PSW!

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SEE FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME EXCLUSIVE FOOTAGE OF ROBOCOP ON PS2, NAMCO'S RAMPANTLY PLAYABLE SMASH COURT PRO TOURNAMENT, EVEN MORE ONIMUSHA 2 AND (HERE WE GO AGAIN) TOCA RACE DRIVER!

ON SALE APRIL 4. IMITATORS BE DAMNED!

TOP 10

JUDGES, PRISON CHAPLAINS, THIRD DETECTIVE FROM THE LEFT – ACTORS WHO FALL INTO THE, “WASN'T HE IN, UM...?” CATEGORY.

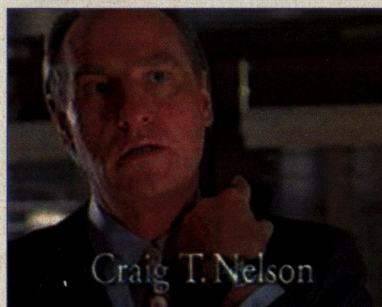


1 F MURRAY ABRAHAM

Tall, smooth thesp-for-hire, whose age and Arabic descent has bestowed on his face a leathery quality, as if manufactured from a well loved armchair. Due to his vast conk, he fills the screen with the presence and dignity of a sort of half man half eagle.

Bald, of course.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Scarface* (Omar Swarez) *Amadeus* (Antonio Salieri) *Last Action Hero* (John Practice) *Star Trek: Insurrection* (Adhar Ru'af) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Lincoln Cathedral



2 CRAIG T NELSON

Strapping, massively familiar looking meat and potatoes guy. While he carried *Poltergeist*, he's most often found as a supporting guy, the colonel, the coach or the chief; big boned, beefy and bland.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Turner and Hooch* (Chief Howard Hyde) *Call to Glory* (Colonel Raynor Sarnac) *All the Right Moves* (Coach Nickerson) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Ice Magic



3 GEORGE DZUNDA

A blue-collar, Brain Dennehy type – only less well known. Root vegetable shaped George has only become naggingly recognisable lately it seems. You know his face, but can you name a film he's in without looking below?

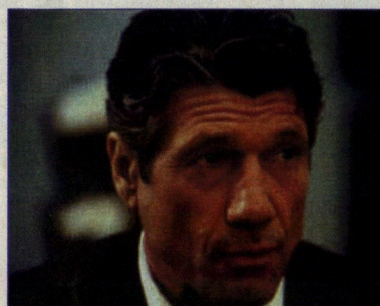
■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Crimson Tide* (Chief of Boat) *Basic Instinct* (Gus) *Instinct* (Dr John Murray) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... The Cornish Guardian



4 BRION JAMES

Sadly dead, James appeared in over 100 TV roles and more than 120 movies. With his distinctive beaky face, he was often cast as the bad, the evil and a gamut of unhinged loons. He was in real life neither unhinged nor apparently a loon.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Knight Rider 2010* (Jared) *Blade Runner* (Leon) *Southern Comfort* (Trapper) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Gina G



5 FRED WARD

Meat-headed Ward hasn't let his 'butcher's window' looks get in the way of his actorly pursuits. Indeed they work for him. Ward is so familiar that if he walked into your living room you'd offer him a cup of tea and a 'Nice' without thinking.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Naked Gun 33 1/3* (Rocco) *Tremors 2* (Earl) *Bob Roberts* (Chip Daley) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... HTV West Newsweek



6 VERNON WELLS

Big Vern is another *deja vu* inducing background baddie. Best moment? Bennet in *Commando*. "I don't need the girl, I don't need the gun Matrix", he screamed in the most face-reddeningly piss piece of acting in the history of film.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Mad Max 2* (Wez) *Fortress* (Maddox) *Kick of Death* (Paulie) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... QPR's Matthew Rose



7 MARTIN KOVE

With a head that qualifies as a small land mass, Kove's roles of late have been a little bargain-bin. His legendary "fear has no place in this dojo" speech from *The Karate Kid* remains career-defining.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *The Karate Kid* (John Kreese) *Cagney and Lacey: The Return* (Isbecki) *Crocodile 2: Death Roll* (Roland) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... The Giant Finn McCool



8 JOE MANTEGNA

Dark, brooding character actor who's always the bridesmaid and rarely the bride. Good at hard men/scam artists and works with David Mamet a lot. He adds a touch of class to our otherwise fairly ropy selection of acting also-rans.

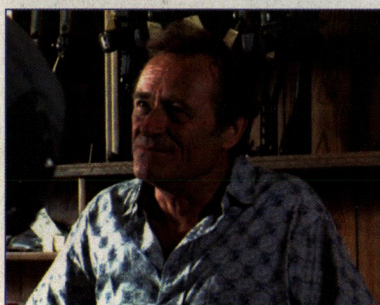
■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *The Godfather Part Three* (Joey Zasa) *Bugsy* (George Raft) *Homicide* (Bobby Gold) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Norwich Accordion Club



9 MICHAEL BERRYMAN

ET meets burns victim in Berryman's unfortunate visage. Perhaps unsurprisingly his body of work is somewhat heavy on psychos, mutants and cannibals and a little lighter on rom-com leading men. Shame.

■ NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Weird Science* (Mutant Biker) *The Hills Have Eyes* (Pluto) *Evil Spirits* (Mr Balzac) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Kendal Mint Cake



10 DICK MILLER

He's been in everything. He pops up in the background all the time – horror, comedy, action... you name it, this grizzled piece of animated scenery is in it. Good at grumpy hotel owners, miserable drunks, sad security men – trampish oafs R him.

NOTABLE APPEARANCES: *Gremlins 2* (Murray) *The Burbs* (Garbage man 1) *The Terminator* (pawn shop clerk) ■ AS FAMOUS AS... Quaoasis



The *Cheatmistress* Presents

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A = 01
A Bug's Life
Abe's Exodius
Abe's Odyssey
Ace Combat 3
Action Bass
Action Man Dest. X
Air Combat
Aladdin: Nasira's Rev.
Alex F's Play Man 2001
Alien Resurrection
Alien Trilogy
Alone in the Dark 2
Alone in the Dark 4

Alundra
Alundra 2
Amerzone
Ape Escape
Apocalypse
Army Men 3D
Army Men Air Attack
Army Men S's Heroes 2
Army Men: Land Sea Air
Army Men: Lock & Load
Army Men: Omega Sold.
Army Men: World War
Atlantis

B = 02
Battle Tanx Global Ass
Black & White
Blade
Breath of Fire 3
Breath of Fire 4
Brian Lara Cricket
Broken Sword 1
Broken Sword 2
Bugs & Taz: Time Busters
Bug's Life
Buzz Lightyear Star C.

C = 03
C & C: Red Alert
C & C: Retaliation
C-12 Final Resistance
Chase the Express
Chicken Run
Civilisation 2
Colin McRae Rally
Colin McRae Rally 2
Colin McRae Rally 2
Command & Conquer
Constructor
Crash Bandicoot
Crash Bandicoot 2
Crash Bandicoot 3
Crash Bash
Crash Team Racing
Croc

D = 04
D. Mirra BMX: Max Remix
D. Nukem: L. of Babes
D. Nukem: Time to Kill
Dave Mirra BMX
David Beckham Soccer
Die Hard Trilogy
Digimon Digi. Card Bat.
Digimon World
Digimon World 2
Dino Crisis
Dino Crisis 2
Disc World 2
Diseworld Noir
Disney's 102 Dalmatians
Disney's Dinosaur
Sheep, Dog & Wolf
Donald Duck: Quack Att.
Doom
Dracula Resurrection
Dracula Last Sanctuary

Dragonball Z
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Driver
Driver 2
Ducati World
Dukes of Hazzard
Dune

E = 05
Eagle One Harrier Att.
ECW Anarchy Rulz
ECW Hardcore Rev.
Evil Dead

F = 06
FA P. Lgue F'ball Man. '00
FA P. Lgue F'ball Man. '01
FA Premier League Stars
Fear Effect
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
FIFA 2000
FIFA 2001
FIFA 2002
FIFA 99

Fighting Force 2
Final Fantasy 7
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy 9
Fisherman's Bail
Flintstones
Formula 1 2001
G = 07

Galerians
Gauntlet Legends
G-Police
Gran Turismo
Gran Turismo 2
Grand Theft Auto
Grand Theft Auto 2
Grinch
GTA: London 1969
Gundam Battle Assault

H = 08
Hard Edge
Harry Potter
Harvest Moon
Hidden & Dangerous
Hogs of War
Hydro Thunder

I = 09
In Cold Blood
ISS Pro Evolution
ISS Pro Evolution 2
Italian Job

J = 10
Jade Cocoon
James Bond: 007 Racing
J. Bond: Tom. Never Dies
James Bond: TWINE
Jedi Power Battles
Jimmy White's 2: Cueball
Jonah Lomu Rugby
Jurassic Park: Lost World

K = 11
Knockout Kings 2001
Koudelka
L = 12
Le Mans 24 Hours
Legacy of Kain
Legend of Dragoon
Lego Racers
LMA Manager 2001
Loaded
Looney Tunes Racing

M = 13
Madden NFL 2002
Martian Gothic

Mat Hoffman's BMX
MDK
Medal of Honor
Medal of Honor Underg.
MediEvil
MediEvil 2
Men in Black
Men In Black: Crashdown
Metal Gear Solid
Michelin Rally Master
Mickey's Wild Adventure
Millennium Soldier Ex.
Mission Impossible

N = 14
NBA Hoopz
Nightmare Creatures
O = 15
Overblood 2
Overboard

P = 16
Pac Man World
Parasite Eve 2
Player Manager 2000
Populous the Beginning
Power Rangers
Premier Manager 2000
Premier Manager 98
Premier Manager 99
Prince Naseem Boxing
Q = 17
Quake 2

R = 18
Railroad Tycoon 2
Rainbow Six
Rayman
Rayman 2
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2
Red Alert (C & C)
Reel Fishing 2
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil: Survivor
Re-Volt
Rogue Spear
Ronin Blade

S = 19
Shadowman
Sheep, Dog & Wolf
Shellshock
Silent Bomber
Silent Hill
SimCity 2000
Simpsons Wrestling
Smackdown
Smackdown 2
Sonic Advance
Soul Reaver
South Park
South Park Rally
Soviet Strike
Space Invaders
Spec Ops: Covert Assault
Spec Ops: Rangers Elite
Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol
Spiderman
Spiderman 2

T = 20
Tarzan
Technomage
Tekken 2
Tekken 3
Tenchu 2
Tenchu: Stealth Assassins
The Italian Job
The Simpsons Wrestling
The Weakest Link
The World Not Enough
Theme Hospital
Theme Park
Theme Park World
Thrasher Skate & Dest
Thunderbirds
Time Crisis
Time Crisis: Project Titan
TOCA Touring Cars
TOCA Touring Cars 2
TOCA World Touring Cars
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tombs
Tony Hawk's
Tony Hawk's 3
Toy Story 2
Transport Tycoon
Tunguska

U = 21
UEFA Striker
Urban Chaos
V = 22
Vagrant Story
Vampire Hunter
Vanishing Point
Vigilante 8 - 2nd Off.
V-Rally
V-Rally 2

W = 23
Wacky Races
War Hammer: Horn. Rat
Warzone 2100
WCW Backstage Assault
WCW Mayhem
Weakest Link
Who Wants 2BA Million.
Wild Arms
Wing Over 2
World Champ. Snooker
World Is Not Enough
World's S. Police Chases
Worms
Worms Armageddon
Wu Tang:Taste the Pain
WWF Attitude
WWF Smackdown
WWF Smackdown 2
WWF War Zone

X = 24
X-Files

Y = 25
Yakuza
Yakuza 2
Yakuza 3
Yakuza 4
Yakuza 5
Yakuza 6
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THE CORPORATIONS RULE
AND ONLY ONE MAN CAN STOP IT**



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